



A Course on Helping

Workbook

V1.12

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The Course on Helping Workbook

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If you downloaded the *Workbook* but would rather have a color spiral-bound version, you can order one at: <http://www.dearneighbors.com/order.html>.

 As you become involved in reading the course, you will occasionally arrive at a page that involves a activity from the *Workbook*. The presence of the *leaf icon* will alert you to a numbered *Workbook* activity. Bookmark where you are at in the course and complete the activity. When finished with the activity, continue where you left off at the course.

This *Workbook* is for your use. You will not submit it as proof of participation and no one will ask you to reveal what you wrote. Each activity is an important part of your personal learning experience. Keep your *Workbook* in a safe location so you can return and re-examine in the future. For example, you might want to retake the course in the future to refresh your learning. As you complete the activities once again, you might want to revise what you wrote earlier. Your *Workbook* entries can become a permanent record of what you have learned.

The author would like to thank the following colleagues from throughout the United States for their review of both the Course and *Workbook*: Ann Keim, Ann Smith, Barb Herl, Deanna Sweat, Denise Brandon, Diane Sasser, Jana McKinney, Karen DeBord, Karen Shirer, Mary Britnall-Peterson, Pamela Muntz, Princetta Jones, Rebecca White, Terri Bookless, and Virginia Hopp.

If you have any questions or comments about the course or these activities, you may contact me by mail, phone, or email.

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1. WHAT I HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH

What brought you to the *DearNeighbors* website? What do you hope to accomplish from taking this course? When you have completed, how will you know that the time you invested was worth the effort? List outcomes for you that would be indicators of success. As you proceed in the course, return here to add new goals that you hope to accomplish.



“If you would be remembered, do one thing superbly well.”

Saunders Norvell





2. MY SUPPORT NETWORK

Take a moment now to think about those individuals in your life who provided you with emotional support. Think back to your childhood. Maybe it was a close relative or a teacher. (For me one of my greatest supporters was my grandfather.) Make a list of their names. In some cases, you might not be able to think of anyone. You are a survivor.

What kind of support network can you rely on for yourself as you reach out to support others? Whom can you go to when you are worried, sad, or angry? Take a moment here to consider and identify your sources of support.

What are the strengths you bring to *Friends*? You will bring to this relationship the decency of every person of goodwill who nurtured you through the years: a grandparent, a teacher, a close friend, your spouse. You can pass on to others what you learned from these important people in your life.

Your history, current supporters, and strengths you acquired are the resources you bring to the helping relationship. List them below.





3. WHAT IS A FRIEND?

What is a true friend? What do friends *do*? How do you know when someone is a *friend*?
Who can be a friend?

There is an Arab proverb that says, *A friend is someone to whom we may pour out the contents our hearts, chaff and grain together, knowing that the gentlest of hands will sift it, keep what is worth keeping and with a breath of kindness blow the rest away.*

In *SONNETS TO SUNDRY NOTES OF MUSIC* Shakespeare wrote,

He that is thy friend indeed,

He will help thee in thy need:

If thou sorrow, he will weep;

If thou wake, he cannot sleep:

Thus of every grief in heart

He with thee does bear a part.

These are certain signs to know

Faithful friend from flattering foe.

Do these quotes make any different for your definition? Return to what you wrote and revise if you want.





4. MY SIGNPOSTS OF STABILITY

What are your signposts of stability ? What can you count on most days for comfort? What would you really miss if they were absent from your life. List each one below. Why are these signposts of stability important? What effect would their absence have on you?





5. TYPES OF LOSS

List some of the losses you have experienced. How did you survive them and what did you learn from them? How did these losses affect your ability to reach out to others in pain?





6. SOURCES OF SUPPORT

	Formal	Informal
Natural	Parents Brothers/Sisters Grandparents Police officers	Friends Neighbors Strangers
Managed	Teachers Therapists Social workers Clergy	Red Cross Caseworkers Salvation Army volunteers Church members

Informal support is voluntary with few, if any, obligations. Support may be temporary. There are few rules for governing the nature and amount of help.

Formal support involves established social roles. Cultural expectations for helping are prescribed. Failure to provide support can result in social disapproval.

Natural support is spontaneous and unplanned.

Managed support is planned and structured. There may be an organizational structure and documents that provide guidelines for the relationship.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of these four forms of support and helping? How would they rank in importance?





7. GROWTH THROUGH ADVERSITY

Reflect on the one of the more intense losses you have experienced as an adult and may have identified in *Types of Loss*.

Did this loss transform you in some positive way? Did it reveal something about you that you didn't see before? What did the experience teach you? How do you bring that lesson into your helping relationships?



“Any beginning, any new understanding in life causes simultaneous feelings of hope and fear.”

Ruth Smalley





8. THE POWER OF THE MOMENT

Brief moments can become great accomplishments. A middle-school teacher attending my in-service programs on nurturing self-respect told the group as she held back her tears, “I cannot tell you what he wrote, but what a male teacher wrote in my high school yearbook next to my picture changed my life. It made a great difference for me including my choice of becoming a teacher.”

Never underestimate the power of a moment of caring. A kind word or handshake can start something in motion for the *Friend* that lasts a lifetime. We will probably never know that we had this effect. Treat every contact as this opportunity for achievement and hope for the best.

Can you recall any example of this insight? Have you found hope in a moment of time because of another person’s caring? Have you discovered that you had this effect on another? Describe what you learned.





9. EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE HELPING

Generate a list of helpful and unhelpful responses someone might offer you as a *Friend* in the following circumstances.

When a significant relationship ended

Helpful

Unhelpful

When you lost something precious to you

Helpful

Unhelpful

When you didn't get a desired job

Helpful

Unhelpful

When you were in an accident or wrecked your car

Helpful

Unhelpful

Can you find common themes for each type of response?





10. GIFTS FOR THE GIVER

My experiences as a Family Services Caseworker with the Red Cross brought me into contact with other wonderful volunteers. The clients from hurricane Rita and Katrina I met enriched my life with their stories of courage. The parents I have counseled as a parent educator, sometimes outside of a community building late at night, made me a more knowledgeable professional and I hope a better person.

Have your acts of helping have made a difference in your life? How has your caring had an effect on you?





11. LOSING IT

Have you ever seen someone out-of-control emotionally? Describe what you observed. What happened? Was this person capable of thinking? Is emotional highjacking always bad? Record your comments.

Consider someone experiencing intense grief. Crying deep sobbing tears can be a form of emotional highjacking. Does the person grieving have the right to let go of thinking to allow pure emotion to assume control? This is what makes a deeply grieving person vulnerable. They may need someone like you to keep them safe.





12. EMOTIONAL MEMORIES

Recall a time when you felt each of these emotions. What experience triggered the emotion?
What did you do?

Sadness

Fear

Anger

Happiness

As you continue in the course, consider what each emotion teaches you about yourself and the *healthy* action the emotion urges you to do.





13. OBSERVING FOR SIGNS OF STRESS

During this week focus outward and be aware of how others communicate distress. Pay attention to:

Speech: changes in pitch or speed, quivering voice, "flat" tone, intensity of voice.

Facial Expression: blushing, eye contact, frowning, trembling jaw, tears, rolling eyes, clenching teeth, biting lips.

Body Movement: bowed head, sagging shoulders, clenched fist, shrugging shoulders, trembling hands, tapping feet or fingers.

Behavior: irritability, crying, throwing something, withdrawing, sullenness, criticizing.

Watch how these signs blend together to form an overall picture of distress. Observe how people relate to each other physically. How do people make contact with each other when one of them is upset? How does their reaction to stress tend to distance them from others?

At the end of the week, revisit this page and record what you saw and heard.





14. OUR RITUAL GREETING

The most common greeting ritual in our society is the "How are you?" greeting people make when they meet someone they know. For example:

Person 1: *How are you?*

Person 2: *I'm fine... how are you?*

Person 1: *I'm fine. (or Great! or equivalent)*

This ritual is insincere because Person 1 is not really interested in getting an honest answer from Person 2. The person being asked the question rarely, if ever, answers it truthfully, and neither party is willing to stop and take the time for a real exchange.

In fact, this "How are you?" is not really a question - it is typically a statement equivalent to "Hi!"

This week, observe the ritual. When someone asks "How are you?" respond with "Hi!" or "Hello, there!" as you pass on the street or greet someone in the store. In other words, respond to the real statement of greeting rather than a question not being asked. Notice how the other person reacts.

Does he or she respond to your "Hi!" with "I'm fine!" The ritual is so ingrained that people will complete their "turn" despite your failure to reply with a question.

If you really would like to know how the other person feels, ask "How is it going today?" If the other person says, "Oh fine," ask the question again. "OK. How is your day going today?" Note the person's response. Record your observations below.





15. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Take a few moments to think about your first impressions of several people you know. Recall your first meeting with them. What happened during those first few minutes that influenced your reactions to these individuals? What did they do (or not do) that left an impression on you? As you meet someone for the first time, be aware of the significance of the first few minutes of contact.





16. FIRST RESPONSE

Consider the following example:

Jason and Terry are visiting over lunch. The conversation turns to the upcoming holiday season.

Jason: *Oh yea, I love Christmas.*

Terry: *Me too, all the colored lights on people's houses, people being nice and stuff.*

Jason: *Good food, too. I really like Christmas cookies.*

Terry: **<pauses, looks away for a moment>** *My momma didn't make cookies at Christmas. She was usually too drunk to make anything.* **<facial expression changes showing anger>**

At that moment, Terry offers a gift to Jason. Will Jason ignore it, pass over it, lose the opportunity?

Jason (A): **<frowns>** *Drunk? What a bummer. Christmas must have been a sad and angry time in your family....*

Or....

Jason (B): **<smiles>** *Well, my dad would put up a big Christmas tree every year, and we'd go caroling on Christmas eve....*

Which of these two reactions shows a better form of listening in response to Terry's last statement? Why? How do you think Terry will respond?

Response A gives a "green light" to Terry. "I hear you," it says, "I'm with you so tell me more." It invites Terry to continue.

What message does *Response B* tell Terry? And how do you think Terry will respond?

I think *Response B* sends the message, "I'm not listening" or "I really don't want to talk about your life." This is a "door slamming" response. Terry will probably draw back from Jason and give up on any hope to find understanding. If this type of response continues, the relationship will wither and collapse.





17. THE VITALITY HANDSHAKE

The way we touch gives the contact significance. Find someone to serve as your partner in this activity. Decide together which of you is more like a flower and more like a bird. You are about to take turns shaking hands.

First, the flower is “it.” When “it” does a handshake, he or she drains all the life out of his or her hand. The hand responds lifelessly, without energy or warmth. Whoever is “it” extends a hand that has no more life than a dead fish. The other partner shakes the hand normally, not expecting the response.

Then switch roles and shake hands once again with the bird becoming “it.”

How did it feel? What message did “it” send by reacting without life?

Talk about the experience with your partner. Then shake hands as you normally do. How is that different? What lesson does this activity reveal about helping relationships? How else is this life vitality expressed in a helping relationship?

During this week pay particular attention to how people convey their life vitality in a positive way. Shake hands with as many people as you can. How do you feel about your handshake? Can you feel an individual's power and vitality conveyed in how they shake hands?





18. LEAVING BARRIERS BEHIND

For the next week, pay attention to barriers between others and us as we talk. A barrier can be a physical object (sitting across from someone at a desk) or one's own body (crossed arms). What effect does this have on the conversation? Who is responsible for the barrier?

Try talking with someone with your arms crossed. How do you feel? Then let your arms drop to your side to a more open posture. Do you notice any difference in how you feel or the other person's reaction?





19. FINDING THE CENTER OF THE STORM

During this week be aware of how your feelings can be suddenly aroused by the strong emotions of others—a child laughing hilariously at a television cartoon, a spouse at the dinner table expressing rage toward a boss, a widow in grief at a funeral.

The strong emotions of others can trigger your emotions. Practice reestablishing an emotional balance when you begin to feel distracted by your feelings.

Imagine that the strong feelings of the other person are like a gale and that you are a tree. The wind passes through the branches and bends the trunk and flutters the leaves, but the tree remains resilient and quickly regains its balance. It allows itself to move with the wind's energy instead of giving resistance.

When emotional negativity swirls around you, feel its energy and allow it to lightly touch you as it passes by.





20. LET IT GO

Find a rubber ball or some other object that you can hold and squeeze firmly.

Hold the rubber ball firmly while sitting at a table. Squeeze it and hold the pressure for a moment. Then think the word “release” and release a rubber ball to the tabletop. Do this several times.

Then repeat the activity while being aware of your breathing. Take a slow, deep breath and think “release” as you breathe out. Imagine that your breath in draws sadness, anger, and fear in the world around you. You transform this incoming breath into something good. As you release and breathe out, imagine releasing courage and peacefulness into the world.

In my view, we don’t literally breathe in anger. The taking and giving I am talking about here is an “as if” attitude. By acting “as if” this really happens, we can actually make a difference for ourselves and those nearby.





21. SOUND OFF

Turn off the sound while you watch a television sitcom or drama. Watch how the actors demonstrate or fail to demonstrate rapport in how they position themselves and reflect the emotional state of a conversation partner. Can you guess the relationships between characters on the basis of how they act when they are together?

Watch people conversing in a public place. Watch their faces as they talk. Does the smile of one trigger a smile in the other? Is their posture and position synchronized? Does this nonverbal behavior relative to each other reveal something about their relationship?

If someone watched you as you relate to a *Friend* with the “sound off,” what would he or she see?





22. FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Find a common object in your home: a tool, cup, egg, pencil, pen, etc. As you hold it before you, say to yourself, "This is a _____." Set the object down for a moment.

Labels diminish real contact. Once we "know" what something "is," we stop discovering its unique qualities.

Pretend for minute that you are a baby - you have no idea what this object is before you. *Close your eyes* and pick the object up again. Now feel its texture, temperature, weight. Just experience the object as though you were picking it up for the first time . . . Now *open your eyes* and take a good look at the object, as though you have never seen it before. Look, really look.

Repeat this activity a few times this week with other objects you find in your home or outdoors. Do we also fail to experience the uniqueness of people we think we know? Do we close off our awareness of a spouse, a child, a friend?

People are constantly changing in subtle ways. Take a good look at people around you. Appreciate them for who they are now, apart from your prior perceptions of who they are.

Record your observations below.





23. MY REACTIONS TO STRESS

How do you typically respond to a stressful event? Examine the following list and check off those reactions that apply to you:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> heart pounding | <input type="checkbox"/> butterflies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tears | <input type="checkbox"/> increased pulse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fists clenched | <input type="checkbox"/> headaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shallow breathing | <input type="checkbox"/> dizziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> eyes narrowed | <input type="checkbox"/> appetite loss/increase |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trembling, weak knees | <input type="checkbox"/> neck/shoulders tight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shaky hands | <input type="checkbox"/> stomach ache/upset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> perspiration | <input type="checkbox"/> backache |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dry mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> diarrhea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blushing | <input type="checkbox"/> nail biting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lump in throat | <input type="checkbox"/> skin rashes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> tapping feet/fingers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> throat tightens | <input type="checkbox"/> cracking knuckles |

How do you manage these physical reactions? What kind of negative images and thoughts typically run through your mind during these moments? How do others typically respond to you? How would you like others to react to you? (Keep in mind that the reactions listed above could be associated with an underlying physical problem or disease that requires medical intervention.)





24. MY TROUBLE TREE

Find an object that you pass by daily or carry in your pocket. The next time you feel burdened by the emotions of helping, touch this object and "give" it your troubles. Maybe it is a tree outside your front door that you touch and "hang" your troubles on before entering your home, or a smooth rock you keep in your pocket. Once you have established the connection you can go to this object in your imagination and send it your worries and distractions no matter where you are.

As an alternative, associate some action with releasing tension. As you mentally sweep your troubles aside perform an action like rubbing your hands together, taking and releasing a deep breath, or pushing both hands together in a downward motion. The action should be simple and not distracting for others. When you find yourself in a tense situation use the action to relax and regain focus.

So what is your equivalent of the Trouble Tree? When can you use it?





25. RITUAL OR RECOGNITION

Think of a person, meeting, or event on your schedule that might be uncomfortable for you. The occasion might involve a trip, a supervisor's evaluation, or a doctor's visit. Decide on a brief statement you could make to others to introduce your concern. For example, you might say, "I'm feeling a little uncomfortable about the plane trip I have to make next month." Choose something that is true and important but not too personal or uncomfortable for the listener

Over the next week, approach at least five individuals to introduce your concern. Allow the discussion to proceed naturally. How do you feel about their responses? Did you feel confirmed and understood? Did you find yourself sharing more or closing down more to some than to others? Why? Who understood you the best? How would you describe this person's style of listening and responding?





26. ARM LIFTING

We may avoid asking for help because we dislike being dependent. Ask a friend to help you with a simple experiment. Stand behind your friend and ask him or her to stretch out both arms parallel to the ground. Gently support the upraised arms underneath the elbows. Then ask your partner to relax his or her arms completely, to remove all muscle tension and to allow you to do all the supporting.

Gently move your partner's arms up and down, checking for signs of tension and resistance. How "heavy" do your partner's arms feel? Did she give control to you or did she maintain muscle tension to help you?

Reverse roles and ask your partner to do the same for you. Can you give up control?

Explain that the purpose of the activity is to experience the difficulty we have in trusting others and in being dependent. Take time to discuss this experience with your partner. Describe what you learned and its implications for helping.





27. FINDING THE HIDDEN "I" (MEANING)

What are the core ideas within the following statements? For each of the following five comments, circle the response that shows an awareness of the core idea expressed.

What the <i>Friend</i> says	Which response shows understanding of meaning?
1. I will never be happy again.	1a. You lost a relationship that was important to you. 1b. You'll never get married again.
2. She makes me so mad!	2a. Life is worth so much more than that. 2b. She did something that upset you.
3. No one listens to me!	3a. You want to be respected and treated seriously. 3b. Things will get better—you'll see
4. My dog Blitz died.	4a. Oh no! Your dog died? You loved that old dog. 4b. Oh that's too bad. You can get another pet.
5. I was fired when the new boss arrived.	5a. You believe that the boss was out to get you. 5b. The new person didn't give you much of a chance.
6. This is a kind of situation to make people nervous	6a. You may not be sure of what is going to happen. 6b. These people live in a lot of fear.
7. I lost everything in the flood.	7a. That must have been scary. 7b. You lost precious items that were part of your history.
8. Someone stole my purse out of my desk.	8a. Did you have a lot of money in your purse? 8b. What a disgusting violation of your space.

The suggested "correct" responses are at the bottom of the next page in the *Workbook*. These examples don't provide you with enough information to make a comfortable judgment, but I think they might help you understand what listening for meaning means.

Can you think of additional examples?





28. FINDING THE HIDDEN "I" (FEELINGS)

What are the real emotions behind the following statements? For each of the following five comments, which response shows an awareness of emotion.

What the <i>Friend</i> says	Which response shows understanding of feelings?
1. I will never be happy again. (downcast)	1a. You might be worried about the future. 1b. You are afraid of forming another relationship.
2. She makes me so mad! (frowns)	2a. You feel angry about what she did. 2b. You feel that she is selfish.
3. No one listens to me! (frowns)	3a. Things will get better—you'll feel better. 3b. That's frustrating when no one gives you a chance.
4. My dog Blitz died. (tears in eyes)	4a. What a sad event. You loved your dog. 4b. Oh that's too bad. You can get another pet.
5. I was fired when the new boss took over. (gazes out the window)	5a. You feel rejected and disrespected. 5b. You feel that the boss was out to get you.
6. This is a kind of situation to make people nervous (eyes dart around the room)	6a. You feel apprehensive about what might happen. 6b. You feel terrified.
7. I lost everything in the flood. (tears in eyes)	7a. That must have been bewildering. 7b. What an agonizing and terrible loss!
8. Someone stole my purse out of my desk. (tears in eyes)	8a. It's so sad to have your property stolen. 8b. You must be feeling awfully angry.

The suggested “correct” responses are at the bottom of the next page in this *Workbook*. These examples don't provide you with enough information to make a comfortable judgment, but I think they might help you understand what listening for feelings means. Of course, the tone of voice and body posture can also be important for conveying emotion.

Can you think of additional examples?

Correct answers for Workbook activity #27: 1A, 2B, 3A, 4A, 5B, 6A, 7B, 8B



“It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak and another to hear.”

Henry David Thoreau





29. DESCRIBING FEELINGS

We can identify feelings by name (You feel angry), by metaphor (You feel like a bear), by the action prompted by the feeling (You feel like smacking somebody), or by the physical experience of the emotion (Your stomach must be tied up in knots). How could you describe each of the following emotions?

Sadness Naming: You feel sad
 Metaphor: Your heart feels like peanut butter.
 Action: You feel like crying
 Physical: Your stomach aches

Fear

Naming
Metaphor
Action
Physical

Love

Naming
Metaphor
Action
Physical

Anger

Naming
Metaphor
Action
Physical

Helpless

Naming
Metaphor
Action
Physical

Loneliness

Naming
Metaphor
Action
Physical

Correct answers for Workbook activity #28: 1A, 2A, 3B, 4A, 5A, 6A, 7B, 8A





30. LISTENING FOR BOTH IDEAS AND FEELINGS

How would you ordinarily respond to each of the following statements? Write your responses below each statement.

Your 5-year-old son has just broken one of his favorite toys. He approaches you with the broken airplane in hand, sobbing. "I want it back! Fix it please!" How would you respond?

Your spouse is trying to make a deadline for completing an important project. He or she has been working all day with papers spread out in the family room. At about 10:30 pm, he (or she) shouts, "That's it! I've had it! I'll never get it done so stuff it!"

You see your neighbor in the supermarket. She approaches you and, with her voice quivering, tells you, "We lost our farm. The bank is calling in our loan and we can't pay. (with tears in eyes) That's it for us!"

You come home from work to find your spouse upset with your 4-year-old. "I can't stand it! Chester is driving me up a wall. Whine, whine, whine, cry, cry, cry . . . that's all I've heard today! give me the car keys. I need to get out of the house for a while."

When you are finished examine your answers again, considering whether they show understanding of feelings and content. Go over each of the situations, this time conveying understanding of core ideas and feelings more effectively.

Keep in mind that effective emotional support involves a blend of verbal and body language. Select the best mix of responding to content and feelings to show understanding. Visualize these situations and how you might respond.





31. QUIET THE INTRUDING VOICE

During your conversations this week, consider how your attention might wander while the other person is talking. Staying focused may seem simple to do, but you will probably realize how difficult it can be when you pay attention to what happens to your awareness. While another person talks, our minds can drift quickly away from his or her words to our own thoughts about any number of things, about dinner last night, to memories of someone who looks similar to the person, to evaluations of the talker's appearance and demeanor. Our attention can be like a drunken monkey, spinning here and there, distracting us from what the person says.

When this happens, we can stop the wandering and bring our attention back to the other person. There's not much sense in being critical of ourselves because this mental wandering is typical. Practice stopping and then refocusing. Paraphrasing what the other person says is one way to keep our minds engaged.

What did you observe this week?





32. ACCURACY CHECK

.It is important not to distort, exaggerate, or minimize a *Friend's* story.

Terry: <pauses, looks away for a moment> *My momma didn't make cookies at Christmas. She was usually too drunk to make anything.* <Facial expression changes showing anger>

Consider these responses:

Jason response 1: *Oh, I'm sure it wasn't as bad as that.*

Jason response 2: *Yea, I bet you wanted to be at other kid's houses.*

Jason response 3: *Yea, you really had a crummy life.*

In the first response, Jason minimizes the problem. In the second, he reads too much into Terry's comment. In the third, he exaggerates. None of these responses show understanding of Terry's experience.

Showing understanding does not mean pressing the *Friend* for information. Here are a few examples of responses that put pressure on the other and show no understanding.

Jason response 4: *Oh, why did she drink so much?*

Jason response 5: *What did your father do when she was drunk?*

Jason response 6: *Did she abuse you when she was drunk?*

None of these responses are appropriate. Each of them are likely to distract Terry, put him on the defensive and make him feel he is being cross examined. Furthermore, these questions pry and ask for information that is none of our business. A question like, "What happened next?" is fine because it does not distract the other from continuing with the thread of his idea. The art and craft of listening means listening for meaning and speaking with insight.

What would be a better response? (see the bottom of the next page for my suggestion)





33. DANGER SIGNS

.Some of the specific behaviors that are signs of potentially severe problems are:

- Persistent, intense depression
- Frequent loss of self-control
- Incapacitating guilt and self-doubt
- Persistent family discord
- Excessive drinking/drug use
- Chronic sleeping or eating problems
- Withdrawal and suspicion
- Inability to concentrate
- Outbursts of violence
- Threats of suicide or other violent acts

Greater concern is justified if more than one of these reactions are present. Two other simple criteria you can use are: (1) Are others alarmed by the individual's behavior? and (2) Does the problem interfere with the *Friend's* daily activities?

If a problem is severe, uncontrollable and frequent then professional help is needed. If this is the case, the most important service you can provide is a referral.

You should *not* assume responsibility for the care of someone who really needs professional help. Taking this role could deny your friend the care he or she really needs. You can still be supportive in the more reasonable role of a friend.

Preceding page...One possible response: *That must have been horrible to have Christmas turn out to be such a sad and angry time. Kids deserve better than that.*





34. LEMON IN MY MIND

What we think about can affect our physiological reactions. For example, imagine right now that you are taking a bite out of a lemon. . . . The bitterness of the skin is overwhelmed by the sudden rush of sour juice.

Stay with that thought for a few moments.

Are you beginning to salivate?

Emotional memories can have this effect. In a similar way what we imagine can cause us to react physically with fear, grief, and anger. There is a mind-body connection between what we think and how we feel.

Can you identify memories that have a physical effect on you?





35. REFRAMING FOR PURPOSE

Reframe each of the following challenges as a purpose. Begin by choosing a challenge you are facing.

Your challenge:

Reframe as a purpose

Challenge for homeowner: Home has been destroyed by a flood or fire.

Reframe as a purpose

Challenge for child: Teased at school for her height.

Reframe as a purpose

Challenge for mother: Learns that her child has cystic fibrosis.

Reframe as a purpose





36. BRAINSTORM SHORT-TERM GOALS

Choose any purpose from the previous page and identify as many short-term goals you can that could be reached to achieve the purpose. Because this is a brainstorm activity, don't worry about whether either the goals are reasonable.

Purpose:

Potential short-term goals

Purpose:

Potential short-term goals





37. BRAINSTORM ALTERNATIVE RESPONSES

Choose any short-term goal from the previous page and identify as many actions you can that could be taken to achieve the goals. Because this is a brainstorm activity, don't worry about whether either the goals or the actions are reasonable.

Short-term goal:

Potential action steps

Short-term goal:

Potential action steps





38. MY TOUCHSTONES, STRENGTHS, AND GRIMSTONES

In each of the following sections, list your touchstones (what brings you joy, happiness, enthusiasm), your strengths (what you are good at doing), and your grimstones (what you hate to do, what you want to avoid, what disgusts you). Be creative. List as many as you can for each category.

Your touchstones

Your strengths

Your grimstones





39. MY EVALUATION CRITERIA

Reexamine your list in the previous workbook activity. Use this information to decide on the criteria you will use to evaluate both the short-term goals and the possible actions you might take. *Absolutely required criteria* means that a goal and action must meet this requirement. If it doesn't it is not going to be on the action plan. *Preferred criteria* are important but not critical. *Rejection criteria* are reasons for eliminating a goal or action.

Critical criteria

Preferred criteria

Rejection criteria





40. MY ACTION PLAN

Choose a challenge and a related purpose. If you haven't identified this challenge earlier, do so now.

Consider all the short-term goals for this purpose. Evaluate each goal for whether it will bring you closer to the purpose. Is the short-term goal reasonable? Does it build on your touchstones and strengths? Does it reduce the likelihood of facing your grimstones? Include one or two short-term goals.

Consider all the action steps that *could* be taken. Now evaluate each action. Does the action bring you closer to the goal? Does the action involve your touchstones and strengths? Does it require one or more of your grimstones? Choose the best actions to take that maximize your touchstones and strengths and minimize your grimstones.

Your purpose

Short-term goal(s)

Action steps





41. INVITATIONS TO A BARNRAISING

Continue with the *Action Plan* you created in the previous activity. If you were to face this challenge and formed this plan, think of every person you can who might provide you with support, information, guidance, or any resource you might find useful.

You might know or not know this person well. Generate the list. Don't rush through the activity. You might want to think some about this and return later.

Call a few on the list that you know well. Tell them about the course and this activity. Ask them for the names of those they can think of that might provide some type of resource for you on that issue. Add their names to the list.

Barnraising invitation list

Summary and Lessons

After generating the list, imagine contacting each person, introducing yourself if necessary and describing your problem. Imagine setting a date to bring everyone together. Imagine what might happen.

Does this activity reveal something important to you? What are its lessons?





42. REINVIGORATING MY INFORMAL SUPPORT NETWORK

In your first *Workbook* entry, you looked back to your experience with caring people who helped shape your ability to care. Take a moment to think about those individuals now in your life who have this capability. Whom do you need to keep close to continue to nurture your strength to respond to the needs of others?





43. REVISITING THE BEGINNING

Return to the very first page of this *Workbook*, “What I Hope to Accomplish.” To what extent have you achieved the goals or outcomes that you hoped to achieve? Where do you go from here? How can you take what you learned and put it into practice and become more effective? Ten years from now, what do you hope to achieve in your ability to communicate and support others going through difficult times?



44. ROADMAP TO HELPING^{VI}

Respond at the *Threshold*...

- Recognize distress
- Make a choice to care unconditionally
- Endure the chaos
- Clear the deck
- Greet respectfully
- Move to the same eye level
- Offer reassuring eye contact
- Move to a comfortable proximity
- Position yourself squarely with an open posture
- Assess immediate health
- Offer a symbolic sanctuary
- Show respect with silence
- Sustain compassion
- Take cleansing, affirmative breaths
- Synchronize with nonverbal behavior
- Provide genuine encouragement
- Observe without evaluating
- Keep yourself safe
- Detach after leaving to restore ourselves

Then *Stabilize*...

- Listen for *truth*, not facts
- Stay focused
- Repeat one word or phrase to encourage
- Invite reflection with open-ended questions
- Paraphrase meaning
- Reflect feelings
- Check for accuracy in listening
- Swing to calm
- Pace if necessary
- Own our emotions
- Be clear and precise
- Show solidarity and common ground
- Maintain and protect confidentiality
- Recognize the need for professional help

Then *Mobilize*...

- Recognize the consequences of the challenge
- Reframe the challenge as a purpose
- Brainstorm short-term goals
- Brainstorm alternative actions
- Focus on touchstones, strengths, and grimstones
- Determine minimum criteria for evaluation
- Form an action plan
- Refer to available resources
- Encourage “barnraising”
- Show appreciation for effort

To reach *Transformation*...

- Affirm success though follow-up
- Confront compassionately
- Evaluate progress
- Say goodbye
- Conduct a personal review
- Reaffirm our support network





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