Lesson Overview

In this lesson students learn communication and negotiation skills, and learn about how self esteem affects our communication and relationships.

Key Points

- Different people have different styles of communicating, and because of this people with different styles of communicating may have difficulty understanding each other
- Good communication skills build healthy relationships and prevent misunderstandings
- Communication occurs both verbally and non-verbally
- We should all have skills for building/keeping up our self esteem

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, students should be able to:
- Describe good communication skills
- Describe characteristics of high self esteem
- Describe characteristics of low self esteem
- List and describe active listening techniques
- Turn a negative self-talk statement into a positive one

Lesson at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>Approximate Class Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOCUS: Self-Reflection</strong></td>
<td>Blank piece of paper and pencil for each student</td>
<td>Ensure that students have paper and pen/pencil to complete this activity.</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEARN: Communication Skills</strong></td>
<td>• Communication PowerPoint Presentation</td>
<td>1. Prepare Communication PowerPoint for display</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self Esteem handout</td>
<td>2. Print/Photocopy Self Esteem Handout</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Using Good Communication Skills handout</td>
<td>3. Print/Photocopy Using Good Communication Skills handout</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Communication Skills worksheet</td>
<td>4. Print/Photocopy Communication Skills worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARIZE: What Have We Learned?</strong></td>
<td>Class discussion</td>
<td>Class discussion</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Education Standards Supported

**National Family and Consumer Sciences Standards:** 13.1-4; 13.6

**National Health Standards:** 2.12.8; 2.12.9; 4.12.2; 4.12.3; 7.12.3
FOCUS: Self Reflection

5 minutes

Purpose:
Students reflect on times they were or were not assertive in speaking up for themselves.

Instructor Information:
Clear communication is important in any relationship. To contribute to a solid relationship, students should practice good communication skills. Also, sometimes in a romantic relationship, there comes a time when one person has to set limits on intimate behavior. The following activities give students good ideas and practice in assertive communication.

Facilitation Steps:
1. Have students take out a sheet of paper and pen/pencil.
2. Have students write down a few sentences describing a situation from their lives in which they did not, or are not speaking up for themselves. Explain that the activities in this lesson are intended to help students become more assertive in speaking up for themselves in a variety of situations.
3. Explain the following to students:
   - Not speaking up for ourselves can happen in a variety of situations or may even depend on who we’re talking with or how we’re feeling at the time. One possible issue with not being self-assertive is that of self esteem.
4. Conduct a class discussion by asking the following questions. There are no specific right or wrong answers, but you can lead the discussion to direct toward better answers. The answers students share will be enlightening for you - to get a better understanding of where they are in their thoughts on this, and it will enlighten them on the various thoughts of their peers and on your thoughts on this.
   - What is self esteem? If someone has high self esteem, would you think they were conceited? What’s the difference between having high self esteem and being conceited?
   - How does a person get high self esteem? Is it from something they do? Is it based on how popular or good looking they are? Is everyone entitled to have high self esteem?
   - How does making good or bad choices for yourself affect your self esteem? Give some examples.
   - Why do you think some people have high self esteem and others have low self esteem? Do you have control over your sense of self esteem? Do you think self esteem can be raised or lowered over our lifetime?
   - Do other people influence your sense of self esteem? If someone tends to lower your self esteem, what could you do about it?
   - How does comparing yourself to others affect your self esteem? Why is it not a good idea to compare yourself with others?
   - What are some ways to improve your self esteem?
5. Note that people will treat us according to the value we place on ourselves. Tell students that each of them is valuable beyond measure.

Materials:
- Students’ blank paper and pencil
LEARN: Communication Skills

**30 minutes**

**Purpose:**

Students learn about self esteem, how to improve it, and how it affects communication with others. They learn about, and practice, various communication, refusal, and negotiation skills.

**Instructor Information:**

It’s inevitable that there will be conflict in any relationship. How that conflict is handled can be the determining factor in whether people are torn apart or brought closer together. When people have poor communication skills, the result is misunderstandings, anger, and distancing. Good communication skills, on the other hand, can bring people back together in an even stronger way, because they now have overcome a conflict together. The following skills can help improve communication in relationships: Listen carefully (don’t interrupt or think of what you’re going to say next), try to see things their way, show empathy rather than defensiveness when they share a problem or criticism about you, stay focused on the current conversation (don’t bring up other issues), use “I” messages rather than “you” messages, try to compromise – as much as it fits with your own values, and admit when you’re wrong – this shows maturity. Remember that the goal of effective communication skills should be mutual understanding and finding a solution that pleases both parties, not ‘winning’ the argument or ‘being right’.

**Facilitation Steps:**

1. Display the *Communication* PowerPoint slides, interjecting comments, examples, information from the Instructor Information, and questions as you go. Sample questions during the presentation:
   - Slide 2: Ask how many students feel they have good communication skills?
   - Slides 3-4: Have students think about a time when they or someone they were talking with used communication do’s and communication don’ts. Ask if any one has an example they’d like to share and ask how that communication technique either helped with discussion or did not help it. Give personal examples if you have any.
   - Slide 5: Ask students to think about which communication style they tend to use most. Give examples of how each style would respond to a question. For example, if the question were posed: Where should we go out to eat?
     - **Passive:** I don’t care – wherever you want to go is fine with me
     - **Aggressive:** We have to go out for pizza, that’s what I want and there are no other options.
     - **Assertive:** I’d like to have pizza for dinner, how does that sound to you?
   - Slide 6: Use a statement with the word “I” as the subject, not the word “you.” This guideline is one of the most important and one of the most surprising. Consider the following examples regarding lateness:
     1. “You are frequently late for dates.”
     2. “You are very prompt for dates.”
     3. “I feel annoyed when you are late for dates.”
     4. “I appreciate your arriving for dates on time.”
     Statements 1 and 2 are “you” statements. People become defensive around “you” statements and are less likely to hear what you say when it is phrased this way. Statements 3 and 4 are “I” messages and create good peer relationship. People are more likely to remain open to your message when an “I” statement is used. Use “I” statements so the effectiveness of your comments is not lost.
   - Slide 7: Give examples of parroting, paraphrasing, and reflecting feelings for a statement. Example: “I hate taking piano lessons, but my mom is forcing me to continue. It’s driving me crazy.”

**Materials:**

- *Communication* PowerPoint Presentation
- *Self Esteem* handout
- *Using Good Communication Skills* handout
- *Communication Skills* worksheet
Parroting: You hate taking piano lessons but your mom is making you do it and it's driving you crazy.
Paraphrasing: You really want to quit taking piano lessons because you dislike it so much.
Reflecting Feelings: It sounds like you're frustrated with your mom for making you take piano lessons.
Demonstrate good and poor body language for active listening.
• Slide 14: Have students come up with an example of positive self talk for each of the three statements and ask for volunteers to give an example. Examples of positive self talk for each of the three statements:
• This problem is so bad, it has no solution.
  - I’m confident that I can come up with a good solution
  - I may not come up with the perfect solution, but I can come up with something that will work.
• I’ll never get an A in this class.
  - I’m just as capable of doing well in this class as anybody else.
• If there is any possibility that something could go wrong, I should worry about it a lot.
  - I shouldn’t worry about things that are out of my control, or that may not even happen.

2. Have students get with a partner and hand out the Communication Skills worksheets – 1 per pair
3. Have pairs take turns giving examples of the communication skills for each of the statements on the worksheet. Circulate and answer questions as needed.
4. Have pairs share some of their answers for the various statements.
Benefits of high self-esteem

- Increased respect
- Increased ability to reach goals
- Increased willingness to try
- Increased feelings of value

Risks of low self-esteem

- Vulnerable to peer pressure
- Feels insecure
- Disrespects others and self
- Doesn’t feel valuable
- Fears failure
- Uses drugs and alcohol
- Behaves destructively

A person who has high self-esteem:

- Acts independently
- Assumes responsibility
- Takes pride in accomplishments
- Tolerates frustration
- Attempts new tasks and challenges
- Handles positive and negative emotions
- Offers assistance to others

Components of self-esteem:

- Belonging
- Willingness to take risks
- Uniqueness – celebrate your different-ness
- Power (personal)
- Productivity
- Support
- Solitude
- Humor
- Gratification difference (and know the difference between needs and wants)
- Mentors and models
- Re-seeding – giving back to others

Improving your self-esteem

- Use positive self-talk: I can do this. I am capable. I am a good person. I have value. I have talents and skills. I am loved (by parents, siblings, friends, God). I am lovely/beautiful/handsome just the way I am.
- Act with integrity- doing what you know is right
- Interpret messages from others: Consider who is doing the talking and where they’re coming from (their own self image, the values and views, their emotions or situation at the time)
- Choose supportive friends
- Accept yourself
Using Good Communication Skills

Good Communication is Important
- Prevents misunderstandings
- Builds Healthy Relationships
- Expresses yourself

Speaking Skills
- Voice volume
- Tone and Pitch
- “I” Messages and “You” Messages
- Empathy

Communication Do’s
- Look the person in the eyes
- Ask questions
- Hear the person out
- Resist distractions
- Be open minded
- Assume responsibility to a two-way dialogue

Communication Styles
- Passive
- Aggressive
- Assertive

Active Listening Skills
- Parroting: Repeating the message
- Paraphrasing: Rephrasing the message in your own words
- Reflecting Feelings/Validating: Showing understanding and valuing of the opinion, even if you don’t agree
- Empathizing: Expressing care and sensitivity to the message sender’s feelings, opinions, experience
- Body Language: Nod, look engaged in what the person is saying, respond with short comments or questions to show you’re paying attention

Communication Don’ts
- Interrupt
- Raise your voice or yell
- Call names or label
- Blame, force or threaten
- Monopolize the conversation
- Laugh at people
- Assume you understand
- Make snap judgments
- Say “always or never”
- Offer advice when it’s not asked for
With your partner, take turns giving examples of how to say or respond to the given phrase in the way indicated.

**You need to get a student in your group project to do her share of the work. Tell her that she needs to get her section of the report done by tomorrow.**

Passive statement: ________________________________________________________________
Aggressive statement: ______________________________________________________________
Assertive statement: ________________________________________________________________

For each of the following statements, use the communication skills shown to rephrase the statement.

**You need to be home right after school. I don’t want you going to the mall after school. I’ve heard that kids have been hanging out there and doing drugs and fighting. I’m concerned about your safety and that you might get into a situation where you can get into trouble.**

- Parroting: ____________________________________________________________
- Paraphrasing: __________________________________________________________
- Reflecting feelings/Validating: ____________________________________________
- Empathizing: __________________________________________________________

**I’m not sure it’s a good idea to have sex at my age or before marriage. Even though I really like John, I don’t feel OK when we have sex. I just try to pretend it will be over quickly. Sometimes I just pretend I’m not even having sex.**

- Parroting: ____________________________________________________________
- Paraphrasing: __________________________________________________________
- Reflecting feelings/Validating: ____________________________________________
- Empathizing: __________________________________________________________

**I don’t know about my mother. One minute she’s so nice and helps me and the next minute she is screaming at me for something.**

- Parroting: ____________________________________________________________
- Paraphrasing: __________________________________________________________
- Reflecting feelings/Validating: ____________________________________________
- Empathizing: __________________________________________________________
Communication and Self Esteem
With your partner, take turns giving examples of how to say or respond to the given phrase in the way indicated.

You need to get a student in your group project to do her share of the work. Tell her that she needs to get her section of the report done by tomorrow.

Passive statement: Would you mind working on your section of the report for tomorrow?
Aggressive statement: You better have your section of the report done by tomorrow.
Assertive statement: You really need to get your section of the report done by tomorrow. We have a due date and our grade will be affected if it’s not in on time. Please don’t let the group down.

For each of the following statements, use the communication skills shown to rephrase the statement.

You need to be home right after school. I don’t want you going to the mall after school. I’ve heard that kids have been hanging out there and doing drugs and fighting. I’m concerned about your safety and that you might get into a situation where you can get into trouble.

Parroting: So you’d like me to be home after school because you’ve heard that kids are going to the mall after school and getting into trouble.
Paraphrasing: So, you know that my friends and I like to go to the mall after school sometimes, and you’ve heard about kids doing drugs and fighting there so you’d like me to stop going there after school. Is that right?
Reflecting feelings/Validating: I understand how you feel concerned about my safety and that I could get into trouble just by being around there after school, given what goes on there.
Empathizing: I imagine you feel worried when I’m at the mall after school.

I’m not sure it’s a good idea to have sex at my age or before marriage. Even though I really like John, I don’t feel OK when we have sex. I just try to pretend it will be over quickly. Sometimes I just pretend I’m not even having sex.

Parroting: So, you don’t feel OK when you have sex.
Paraphrasing: Sometimes you can’t even admit to yourself that you’re having sex.
Reflecting feelings/Validating: I understand that you’re feeling uncomfortable about having sex with John because you really aren’t sure it’s right.
Empathizing: I can see how you must be worried about having sex with John.

I don’t know about my mother. One minute she’s so nice and helps me and the next minute she is screaming at me for something.

Parroting: So, your mother is nice one minute and screams at you the next.
Paraphrasing: She’s inconsistent, so you don’t know what to do. Is that right?
Reflecting feelings/Validating: I can understand how you feel confused because your mother is changing all the time.
Empathizing: I imagine you must feel frustrated with not know how to behave or what she’ll do next.
SUMMARIZE: What Have We Learned?

5 minutes

Purpose:
Reflect on learning and summarize/review the main points of today’s lesson.

Facilitation Steps:
1. Conduct a class discussion by asking the following questions:
   - What are some benefits of high self esteem?
     - Increased respect
     - Increased ability to reach goals
     - Increased willingness to try
     - Increased feelings of value
   - What are some risks of low self esteem?
     - Vulnerable to peer pressure
     - Feels insecure
     - Disrespects others and self
     - Doesn’t feel valuable
     - Fears failure
     - Uses drugs and alcohol
     - Behaves destructively
   - Give me some examples of the characteristics of a person with high self esteem.
     - Acts independently
     - Assumes responsibility
     - Takes pride in accomplishments
     - Tolerates frustration
     - Attempts new tasks and challenges
     - Handles positive and negative emotions
     - Offers assistance to others
   - What are some ways to improve your self esteem?
     - Use positive self-talk: I can do this. I am capable. I am a good person. I have value. I have talents and skills. I am loved (by parents, siblings, friends, God). I am lovely/beautiful/handsome just the way I am.
     - Act with integrity- doing what you know is right
     - Interpret messages from others: Consider who is doing the talking and where they’re coming from (their own self image, the values and views, their emotions or situation at the time)
   - Choose supportive friends
   - Accept yourself
   - What are the three communication styles?
     - Passive
     - Aggressive
     - Assertive
   - What are some ways to demonstrate active listening?
     - Parroting
     - Paraphrasing
     - Reflecting Feelings/Validating
     - Empathizing
     - Body Language
   - What tends to happen when you use “You” statements in a discussion?
     - People become defensive around “you” statements and are less likely to hear what you say when it is phrased this way.
Unit One—Lesson Three
Communication and Self Esteem