

newsletter for nurturing support groups

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NETWORKING

Greetings!

Everyone seems to know the importance of connecting with other people, or **NETWORKING** as it is now called. In this 23rd issue of **WE**, a newsletter for and about groups of people who get together for the purpose of giving each other personal support, we will explore ways to expand and use our personal networks.

There is a description of How To Play The Networking Game, and a list of Networking Golden Rules. The suggested activities include:

- Let's Exchange
- Listening is the Key to Networking
- When I Feel Responsible for Others

For those of you who have contact with young children, there is news of a delightful book.

Remember to tell me what you want in **WE**. I'm glad that I am part of your Network.

Jean Illsley Clarke

Jean Illsley Clarke, Editor

Networking: Access To The Unexpected How To Play The Networking Game

A Network is simply an array of points in space, connected by lines of communication. Human Networks are those people, places and things you know about. The process of networking is simple; it is information and idea exchange.

Everyone does some kind of networking. It is not a new process and does not occur in only certain segments of society. However, it is obvious that some people are much better at it than others. We want to share some ideas about the networking process and how you can take better advantage of the information tools available to you.

The Golden Rule of Networking is: Be Useful. This means that you must always be thinking about the other party in the exchange. Usually, the information exchanged is abstract. Also, the exchange might not be immediate. However, our experience tells us that people who are considerate of other people's privacy and needs do better over the long run. Even when you are dealing with someone who is already being paid to give you the information, it is important to think about what you can do for them in exchange. The flip side of being useful, by the way, is letting other people be useful to you.

Networking is the process of developing and using contacts to:

1. share information and ideas
2. give and get advice and feedback in a supportive manner
3. refer leads and share contacts

The purpose of a network is for career or personal development rather than for socializing, so contacts need not be personal friends.

Women who want further information on how to network in the business world can read **Networking: The Great New Way For Women To Get Ahead**, by Mary-Scott Welch (Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, 1980), or **Women's Networks: The Complete Guide to Getting a Better Job, Advancing Your Career and Feeling Great as a Woman Through Networking**, by Carol Kleiman (Lippincott & Crowell, 1980).

When you are trying to find information that is not in a book or official document of some kind, you might be confused about where to start. Here are some questions we ask ourselves if we have to explore an unknown territory:

Who makes their living keeping track of the information I am looking for? What business makes use of this information? What club or organization advocates or promotes this particular point of view?

Where do people who know this information hang out? Where do they work and live?



Who has had to collect this information before? Could I share the cost of gathering the information with others who also need it? Could I make this information available to others after I gather it?

How can I be prepared to "pay" for this information if I have no money? What are my skills and abilities? What information can I collect for someone as payment?

How can I evaluate the information I receive? How do I know it is true? How is this information biased? What are the other points of view on this issue or information?

Thanks to OPEN NETWORK. If you want more information about OPEN NETWORK, please write to them at 1447 Ogden, Denver, Colorado 80218.

The purpose of this activity is to do some networking with other people in this group and to improve the quality of our networking abilities by sharpening our listening skills.

1. "Will you make out a name tag like the one below and wear it for this workshop?"

<i>Name</i> <i>Organization and Title (opt.)</i> <i>I am an expert in _____</i> <i>I am interested in _____</i>
--

2. **After 5 minutes, say** "Pick up three 3"x 5" cards (and a pencil, if you need it). Walk around looking at people and their name tags until you find someone you'd like to interview. Choose someone you have not met before."
3. "You and your partner will have about 15 minutes to get acquainted. Fill out a 3"x5" card about your partner as below:" Post an example.

<i>name</i> <i>title</i> <i>company</i> <i>company address</i> <i>work telephone</i> <i>home address</i> <i>home telephone</i>	<i>notes:</i>
<i>date</i>	<i>where met</i>
<i>follow up?</i>	

"Be aware of all the good listening skills you already have."

4. **After 15 minutes, say** "Now, will you and your new partner locate two more partnerships and sit in a circle of six? This will be your small group for the remainder of the workshop. Introduce your partner to others in the group by name only."
5. Post your ground rules and negotiate any more the group may want.

GROUND RULES <i>You have the right to pass.</i> <i>Every opinion is honored.</i> <i>Everyone participates.</i>
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6. **Say**, "Please think about yourself during the interview and assess your physical attending skills. Read the following description:

PHYSICAL ATTENDING SKILLS It is important that you be at the same physical level as the speaker. If the speaker is sitting, you will probably attend better if you sit, too. High attending — body is squared and open, eye contact, leaning slightly forward. Moderate attending — body is squared not quite so open or relaxed, eye contact, sitting or standing upright. Low attending — body is not facing nor eyeing the speaker, slouching.
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"Will each of you rate yourself high, moderate or low? If you wish to, you may ask the person you interviewed to rate you."

7. "Will you assume 'high attending' body position and listen to these excerpts from 'Listen' by Ray Houghton?"

LISTEN!!!

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you begin to tell me why I should not feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problems, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen!! All I asked was to listen to me — not talk or do — just hear me, please.

Advice is cheap — Seventy five cents can get you both "Dear Abby and Billy Graham" in the same newspaper.

And I can do for myself, I am not helpless. Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can do and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and inadequacy.

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you and get about this business of understanding what is behind this irrational feeling.


When that's clear — the answers are obvious and I don't need advice. Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.


So, please listen and hear me, and if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn — I will listen to you.


by Ray Houghton


8. "Will you take a second card and, using 'high attending' body position, interview a new partner from your small group? After about ten minutes, tell your group one thing (skill, interest, connection, experience) your partner has to share in the network."
9. **After 10 minutes, say** "Please think about yourself during the interview and assess your empathy level." Post or hand out and read the following description:

LEVELS OF EMPATHY

Level I:  No attention is paid to either the content of the speaker's communication or his or her feelings. The listener may completely ignore, deny, argue with, or evaluate what the speaker has said.

Level II:  The listener attends to either the content or the feelings of the speaker's communication, but he or she may completely ignore, deny or evaluate the other half of the message (either content or feelings) expressed by the speaker.

Level III:  The listener attends to both content and feelings of the speaker's communication. The response is confined to the verbal language and surface feelings expressed by the speaker.

Level IV:  The listener responds to the verbal language in context and the nonverbal behavior of the speaker in order to accurately express the deeper feelings and meanings of the speaker.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

When I Feel Responsible FOR Others...

I fix

**protect
rescue
control
carry their feelings
don't listen**

I feel... tired

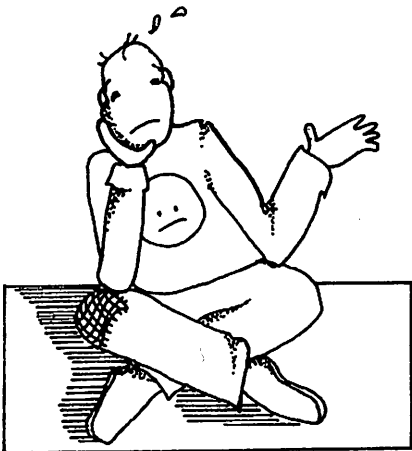
**anxious
fearful
liable**

I am concerned with:

**the solution
answers
circumstances
being right
details
performance**

I am a manipulator.

**I expect the person to live
up to my expectations.**



When I Feel Responsible TO Others...

I show empathy

**encourage
share
confront
level
am sensitive
listen**

I feel...relaxed

**free
aware
high self-esteem**

I am concerned with:

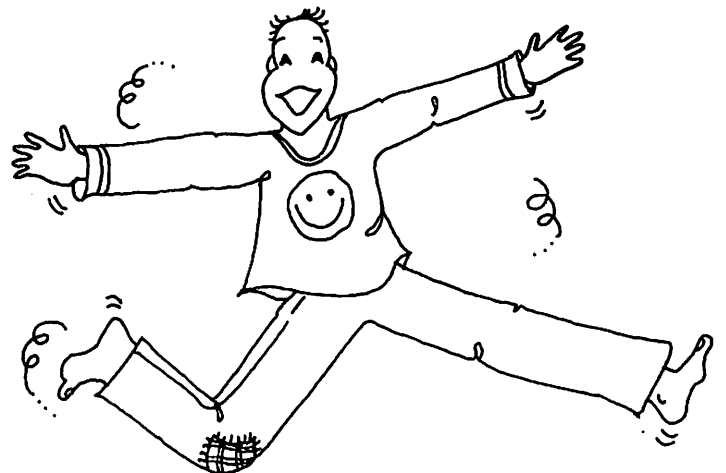
**relating person to person
feelings
the person**

**I believe if I just share myself,
the other person has enough
to make it.**

I am a helper- guide.

**I expect the person to be
responsible for himself and his
own actions.**

I can trust and let go.



Networking Golden Rules

Dear Jean,

Recently I attended a new networking program that is starting up within the Metro State College system called PERC (Parent Education Resource Center). Their meeting speaker was Pat Wagner from a company called OPEN NETWORK, an organization dedicated to getting people together for whatever their needs are. Pat inspired us and taught us about NETWORKING and how it works. She gave Five Golden Rules in her talk, and I thought I would share them with WE.

Networking Golden Rules:

1. **Be Useful...**a. to others, and
b. let others be useful to you.
2. **Don't Be Boring...** skip the weather report and get down to business, like, do you know where I can find antique golf clubs?
3. **Be Concise** about what you want/need/have to give. When giving out information, give one name or one phone number, then ask that person to get back to you with what they discovered.
4. **Listen...**a. to "them", they that have something to say, b. and learn what is available to you and others.
5. **Ask (Useful) Questions...** don't ask, "Are you nuts or something?" Ask instead, "How do you know that's true?" or "Tell me more," or "Is there more?" or "What have you tried?" etcetera.
6. **Play The Wild Card...** Everyone you meet knows at least 250 people (from relatives to names overheard) who know something about something! If you need something, ask the next five people you meet how they can help you. Follow up on their information and report back to them about how it worked.

I'm starting a Networking filing system. I met a lady at PERC who is looking for audio-visual material on parenting. THE NEXT DAY I met a media specialist who had 4 sources!! I connected the two ladies. Boy, do I feel useful!!

Jean Wakely, Denver, Colorado

Let's Exchange

Have each person take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. On one side, list ten things you NEED. Be concise. (i.e.: \$15,000 to start my own business; free interior decorating advice; people interested in carpooling to the theatre, etc.)

On the other side list ten things you have to OFFER to others. Be concise. (i.e.: an eight week parenting course in self-esteem; a lecture program for parents or professionals; luncheon retreat on my porch in the mountains with excellent conversation, etc.) Give ten to fifteen minutes.

Ask each person, in turn, to report one NEED item or describe one OFFER item. See if anyone else in the room can fulfill each need or wants to accept an offer.

Thanks to Jean Wakely of Denver for sending this activity to WE. It was designed by Pat Wagner of Open Network, for PERC (Parents Education Resource Center). Jean reports that the exercise was done with over 30 people in the room. Only one person did not have a lead to his need-- antique golf clubs-- but everyone took his name and number and said they'd ask around. WE

Opening Activity That Offers Everyone A Positive Personal Message ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Each person find a partner and tell her, "One thing I have to offer other people in a network is _____, and one thing I would like to get is _____." Introduce your partner to the group and tell what she has to share.

Closing Activity That Offers Everyone A Positive Personal Message ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Ask people to stand in a circle, join hands and say together "We all need help and support. I will accept help from my network as well as offer it."

Facilitator Training Workshops

August 22 - 26, 1983, Seattle, Washington

Led by Jean Illsley Clarke

August 22 - 26, 1983, Cincinnati, Ohio

Led by Gail Nordeman

A week-long workshop for people who want to...

- Facilitate the **Self-Esteem: A Family Affair** parenting model, or
- Improve group leadership skills for working with growth and education and support groups.

Write to WE for details.

Suggested Activity



When I Feel Responsible For Others



Hand each person a copy of the enclosed sheet, "When I Feel Responsible For/To Others."

Ask, "Will you read the lists carefully and put a small check by each thing that you thought or did during the past week?"

Ask, "Will you draw a big star by one or two items that you would like to do better, and will you draw a hot air balloon by one or two that you would like to let go?"

Ask, "Will you move into groups of five, and each of you ask the other four people for specific ideas on how to improve your starred items, and for substitutes for the things that you want to let go?"

Example: "I want to be able to confront better."

"Take an assertiveness training class."

"Do one small confrontation a day."

"Try out the Nine Methods of Confronting in the Behavior Change Chain."

Example: "I really would like to let my need to always 'be right' go up with a hot air balloon and never come down. What can I do instead?"

"Focus on being kind rather than being right."

"Notice how often you appreciate what other people do, even when it isn't exactly 'right'."

"Appreciate yourself for being human, ready to try, willing to risk and concentrate on those traits."

Reassemble the group and ask if any individuals want to share learnings with the whole group.

Ask if anyone added items to either side of the list.

"When I Feel Responsible For Others and To Others" was sent to me by WE readers from two different cities. Neither knew the author. Do you? If so, please tell me.

Book Review

Open The Door, Let's Explore is a delightful book about Neighborhood Field Trips for Young Children. Whether you work with children, have young children of your own, or are visited by young children, this book is for you. The contents are divided into the general categories of field trips, walks, the community at large and special hints for teachers. Each section is comprehensive but very easy to read. For example, under **Hospital** you will find words to learn and use, things to talk about, read, observe, ask, sense and collect. Follow-up activities include discussion ideas, and directions for making medical instrument charts, a hospital board game, stories, dramatic play, books and materials display, and a body systems diagram. There is an extensive list of books to read with the children. Among the six songs, poems and fingerplays is this:



To The Hospital

This is the way we go to the hospital

Go to the hospital

Go to the hospital

This is the way we go to the hospital

If we are sick in the morning.

(pretend to drive to hospital)

Additional verses:

This is the way we wait at the hospital...

(Children sit and make fidgety and wiggling movements)

This is the way they take our pulse...

(Put fingers of one hand on wrist of other hand)

This is the way they check our blood...

(Pretend to prick finger)

This is the way they hear our heart...

(Put on pretend stethoscope and move it around)

This is the way they take an X-ray...

(Pretend to take picture)

This is the way they put on a cast...

(Pretend to wrap up leg)

To the tune of
"Mulberry Bush"



Somebody should have written this particular book long ago, and I'm glad that Rhoda Redleaf has written it now. You may order it by writing to Toys 'n Things Press, Resources for Child Caring, Inc., 906 North Dale Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55103, \$8.95.

Suggested Format for Group Meetings

place _____

date _____

time _____

person in charge _____

PROGRAM:

- Opening Activity that Offers Everyone A Positive Personal Message
- Ground Rules
- Celebrating Wins and Sharing Problems
- Asking for Support
- Practice Skills, new learnings, play
- Suggestion Circle
- Plan the next meeting
- Resentments and Appreciations
- Closing Activity that Offers Everyone A Positive Personal Message

Listening is the Key To Networking...

continued from page 2

10. "Will each of you rate yourself on Empathy Level I, II, III or IV? If you wish to, you may ask the person you interviewed to rate you."
11. "Will you take your third card and, keeping high attending body position, practice empathic listening for about ten minutes as you interview a new partner from your small group?"
12. **After 10 minutes**, for closing, if the whole group is small (30 or less), ask, "Will each of you introduce your last partner and tell the group one thing she has to offer other networkers?"

If the group is larger than 30, ask, "Will each circle of six join with another circle of six and in the group of twelve, introduce your last partner and tell the group one thing he has to offer other networkers?"
13. **After 10 minutes**, close by asking for "I learned..." statements and for resentments and appreciations. Thank people for participating and remind them that they have three new cards to put in their networking file.

This activity was adapted from part of the longer workshop, "Networking For Fun, Effectiveness and Profit" by Deane Gradous, Nancy Delin and Martha Saul.

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• Thoughts on theory and purpose of support groups
• News from other Support Groups
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