



## **Interpersonal Relationships**

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**LIFEPAC Speech: Essentials of Communication**  
**A Guide to Interacting Effectively in Today's World™**

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## Foreword

*Speech: Essentials of Communication: A Guide to Interacting Effectively in Today's World* is a five-unit elective for high school students, providing theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for truthful and effective communication. Students will learn about communication truths and theories, characteristics of language, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, and public speaking.

This course contains information and activities that show students how to effectively express ideas and interact with others in the world around them. Studying the units and applying the communication principles in this course will help students discover ways in which their knowledge enables them to honor God, communicate truth, develop relationships, meet the needs of others, fulfill social obligations, exchange information, and reach personal goals.

This course also provides a special application of practical and effective communication skills to the business world, a destination towards which many career-minded students will be heading.

*Speech: Essentials of Communication* contains the following units. The unit for this student workbook is highlighted below.

Unit 1 — Communication Foundations

Unit 2 — Language Characteristics

Unit 3 — Interpersonal Relationships

Unit 4 — Understanding Groups

Unit 5 — Presenting and Interpreting Public Messages

# Why is Communication Essential?

Welcome to *Speech: Essentials of Communication*. The development and proper use of communication skills is one of the most important goals we should strive to achieve in life. As beings that are created in the image of God, we have a God-given ability to communicate through spoken, written, and nonverbal means; however, because of the entrance of sin into the world through Adam, we often witness a distortion of the communication process that God originally provided. We have, as a result of the Fall, seen the breaking down of human relationships and communication.

In response to this situation, God has chosen to communicate to the world through His Son, Jesus Christ; the Bible; and His Creation. His communication to the world has been “essential” to restoring relationships and the communication process that people need.

Because of God’s communication with us, Christians have been provided with the spiritual resources they need in order to properly develop effective communication skills. Following the pattern of the “Master Communicator,” we have the responsibility and privilege to communicate the truths of God’s Word and His Creation to others throughout the world. As a part of this task, we must learn to make an accurate and efficient use of communication tools and procedures that are commonly found in society, whether at home, school, or in the business world.

For Christians, communication is crucial to not only receiving but also providing truth. Each day, you have the opportunity to interact with family, friends, teachers, co-workers, and any number of other people in a variety of settings. The effectiveness of your interactions with others influences your ability to communicate well for everyone’s benefit.

*Speech: Essentials of Communication* is intended to show you in a practical, hands-on way, how to be an effective communicator for God in the world. As you move through each of the five units, you will identify, analyze, and evaluate communication skills and processes that you will need for spiritual, moral, personal, social, and professional growth. Doing so will help you develop and demonstrate your own communication skills and thereby assist in building your ability and confidence when you are called upon to interact with others.

The course covers concepts and ideas that are widely-used in the field of communication. School, church, home, and work-world settings provide real-life scenarios that allow for consideration of how these communication principles can be applied in real-world situations. Interacting with the concepts and perspectives in *Speech: Essentials of Communication* gives you the opportunity to develop discernment and become better equipped to practice a Christian understanding of communication in the world around you.

# Unit Three: Interpersonal Relationships

**I**nterpersonal communication is the type of communication that is most often used. It occurs between family members, spouses, friends, and acquaintances. It also encompasses some professional and business communication.

The importance and effectiveness of interactions within interpersonal relationships can be measured in terms of quality and quantity. Some prefer to examine it qualitatively, referring to the value of a relationship; others prefer to measure it quantitatively, referring to the number of people that are involved. Measured qualitatively, a conversation between family members would have more value than an exchange between a customer and a salesclerk. However, if the two communications are measured quantitatively, they are equal because both conversations involve two people.

For our purposes, we'll consider both aspects of measurement in our examination of interpersonal relationships. We'll begin by studying different types of interpersonal relationships and their purposes and then look at how to manage professional and social communications. Following this, we'll study the rules and social understandings of interpersonal communication. Finally, we'll discuss how to successfully participate in the interview process.





## Objectives

When you have completed Unit 3, you should be better prepared to:

- Identify and analyze types of interpersonal relationships and their purposes. (Section I)
- Identify and analyze stages in an interpersonal relationship, based on Knapp's Relational Model. (Section I)
- Apply problem-solving strategies to interpersonal communication issues. (Section I)
- Examine relationship conflicts and propose strategies to achieve conflict resolution. (Section I)
- Evaluate and summarize your own and others' communication effectiveness. (Section II)
- Select appropriate communication management skills (etiquette, protocol) in interpersonal communication. (Sections II and III)
- Participate appropriately in interpersonal communication situations in regard to different cultural and social backgrounds and settings. (Sections II and III)
- Identify and analyze ethical and social responsibilities of communicators. (Section III)
- Analyze and apply the use of appropriate communication skills within interview settings. (Section IV)
- Select appropriate means of gathering and using accurate and complete information as a basis for making communication decisions. (Section IV)



# I. Interpersonal Relationships

**G**od created you to be a social creature to interact and communicate with other people. Your ability to competently communicate on an interpersonal level will have a profound effect on every human relationship you develop, regardless of whether that relationship is meaningful or superficial, fleeting or enduring, strictly business or deeply personal. Section I covers the subject of interpersonal communication, which describes communication between people. The lessons for this section are as follows:

## Types of Interpersonal Relationships

In this lesson, you'll look at two main categories of interpersonal relationships: personal-social relationships and professional-functional relationships. You'll learn to recognize the differences between these categories, noting that personal-social relationships primarily involve communication with family members and friends, while professional-functional relationships involve communication with employers, employees, clients, and the general public. At the completion of this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Identify and analyze types of interpersonal relationships and their purposes.**

## Relationship Stages

This lesson will introduce you to Knapp's Relational Model and its description of general patterns of relationship development and deterioration. An understanding of the model may assist you in considering the health of relationships in your own life. At the completion of this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Identify and analyze stages in an interpersonal relationship, based on Knapp's Relational Model.**

## Fluctuations in Relationship Development

In this lesson, you'll learn strategies that will help you avoid and/or solve problems that occur in interpersonal communications. You'll also learn about approaches to mending damaged or broken relationships. At the completion of this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Apply problem-solving strategies to interpersonal communication issues.**
- **Examine relationship conflicts and propose strategies to achieve conflict resolution.**

Having completed this section, you should possess greater knowledge and resources to pursue the development of your interpersonal communication skills for the benefit of others.

# Types of Interpersonal Relationships

## Objective

- Identify and analyze types of interpersonal relationships and their purposes.

## Vocabulary

**discretion** – good sense; tact

## Types and Strategies

Interpersonal relationships are relationships between people. They can occur at various levels of intimacy. Some are personal and relational while others are impersonal and functional. Interpersonal relationships that are personal and relational are considered personal-social relationships. Interpersonal relationships that are characteristically impersonal and functional are considered professional-functional relationships.



## Personal-Social Relationships

Personal-social relationships include friendships and family relationships. A friend is not simply someone we know by name or have spoken to a few times. People we know casually are considered acquaintances.

Aristotle defined a friend as “a single soul dwelling in two bodies.” Friendship is a relationship between two or more people characterized by our desire to make ourselves available, helpful, honest, loyal, trustworthy, and caring to the other person. A true friend is one who is willing to meet the needs of another.

**Friendships.** Friendships are necessary to our emotional well-being and enrich our lives through their assuring presence. Friends help each other deal with problems. Good friends make time for one another. They push aside other duties in order to assist their friends. They are available for each other in times of need and times of joy. Good friendships meet a critical requirement in good relationships: the needs of *both* parties are met through the relationship.

Friends are available because they care. Two people cannot truly be friends unless they are concerned about the other’s well-being. Friendship involves a special kind of love that is in part motivated by a need for companionship. The purest kind of friendship seeks to give of itself without expecting any type of tangible return. Friends communicate kindness and concern. “Friendship and love, to be real, must not lie in words, but in deeds,” said Charles Spurgeon in one of his sermons.<sup>1</sup>

# “The family is the basic unit of society.”

Friendships grow with honesty. Friends share personal thoughts and feelings with each other. They take off the mask of calculated impressions and reveal their true selves. Friends also advise and criticize. They tell each other what is both painful and needful so that greater pain might be avoided.

Friends are trustworthy. Friends trust each other with their true selves and risk revealing themselves to one another in ways they might not even share within other close relationships. The sharing is based upon a mutual trust and **discretion**. Restraint is shown in sharing with others what has been shared between friends.

A friend is loyal. Friends empathize with each other and assist each other through troubling times. Through compassion, one friend feels the misfortune suffered by the other. Likewise, the successes of one are celebrated together.

Availability, compassion, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, and empathy are six characteristics of close friendships. However, the term “friend” is also used to describe other relationships with similar qualities but without the level of intimacy afforded to close friends. This secondary group can be made up of acquaintances, new friends, and business associates.

**Families.** Family is another type of personal-social relationship. It involves many important relationships that fulfill needs in a person’s life. Typically, a family consists of a father, a mother, and their children. However, its structure may vary. It may also consist of one parent and a child or children; or it may include extended family members such as grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles. The family is the basic unit of society. As such, it provides its members with protection, companionship, and socialization.

One of the purposes of creating a family is to rear children. The responsibilities of parenthood include offering the children spiritual nurture, protection, companionship, and socialization. Protection may

include shelter, food, clothing, and knowledge of accepted community standards for safety. Fulfilling a child’s basic physical needs might protect him from danger, disease, and exposure, but there are also spiritual and emotional needs. To meet these needs, parents nurture their children through affection and instruction. Affection guards the child from unnecessary physical, mental, and psychological problems. Instruction from the Bible and warnings about dangerous situations protect the child from spiritual, emotional, and physical harm.

The creation of a family also provides its members with companionship. Members may share the same house, eat meals together, and engage in the same activities. A father might accompany his son to a baseball game; a daughter might go with her mother to a shopping mall; a sister might prepare a meal with her



brother. Companionship encourages communication and helps strengthen and maintain family ties. At times, “family” can reach out beyond the biological boundaries. We may have people in our lives who are considered “family” because they have crossed over from friendships into the even more intimate circle of family.

Socialization is the process by which we learn appropriate responses to given situations within our communities and cultures. Parents socialize their children by teaching them religious beliefs, cultural norms, and family customs. Teaching methods may include instruction, corrective language, involvement in traditional activities, and discipline. For instance, Western society views the use of vulgar language as unacceptable behavior in most settings. To socialize a child properly on this point, a parent might forbid a child from using vulgar language and punish him if he does so. The child of well-mannered parents is likely to grow up to be a well-mannered adult. The transmission of cultural norms via families is important to the stability of society.

### **Professional-Functional Relationships**

Professional-functional relationships include colleagues, superior-subordinate, and professional-client relationships. These types of relationships are goal-oriented. Professional-functional relationships are therefore less personal and less commitment-bound than personal-social relationships.

Professional-functional relationships are central to the production of goods, services, and commerce. Co-workers at a home construction site communicate with each other to complete the task. The plumber tells the foundation contractor how the concrete must lay around the pipes, while the drywall contractor works with the carpenter to ensure the quality of the walls. The better the communication among all involved, the more effective and productive they may become at completing their task.

**Superior-Subordinate.** The relationship between a superior and a subordinate is also important to the completion of tasks. Superiors or leaders act as guiding influences in given situations. Subordinates or followers work to fulfill the leader’s instructions or

requests. In the home construction industry, the plumber, carpenter, foundation contractor, and drywall contractor take instructions from the site foreman. The foreman is responsible for the completion of the house and coordinates the various laborers toward that end. Effective communication between superior and subordinate is vital to the task.

**Professional-Client.** Another type of professional-functional relationship is the professional-client relationship. The purpose of the professional-client relationship is to render and receive services. A doctor may interact with a patient to diagnose and treat disease. Likewise, a lawyer might review a client’s case history so he can argue his client’s case before a judge. As with any relationship, communication is essential to the completion of the task.

**Employee-Public.** Yet another type of professional-functional relationship is the relationship between an employee and the public. Salesclerks, customer service representatives, and marketing representatives each relate to members of the public on behalf of their organization in an interpersonal manner. For example, a salesclerk listens to a customer’s needs in order to sell him the desired product. An employee’s relationship with a member of the public is important to the company’s continued financial success.



Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the word list below. Words may be used more than once.

family                      personal-social                      professional-functional                      superior  
friendships                      professional-client                      subordinate

- I.1 \_\_\_\_\_ relationships are primarily goal or task-oriented.
- I.2 A daughter's relationship with her father is considered a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship.
- I.3 Availability, compassion, honesty, confidentiality, loyalty, and empathy characterize virtues found in \_\_\_\_\_.
- I.4 \_\_\_\_\_ relationships provide members with companionship, protection, and socialization.
- I.5 The \_\_\_\_\_ is the basic unit of society.
- I.6 A doctor's relationship with his patient would be considered a \_\_\_\_\_ relationship.
- I.7 Effective communication between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ is vital to the task.
- I.8 Interpersonal relationships that are characteristically impersonal and functional are considered \_\_\_\_\_ relationships.
- I.9 Interpersonal relationships that are personal and relational are considered \_\_\_\_\_ relationships.



Teacher check \_\_\_\_\_

Initial

Date

# Relationship Stages

## Objective

- Identify and analyze stages in an interpersonal relationship, based on Knapp's Relational Model.

All interpersonal relationships, regardless of whether they are personal-social or professional-functional, go through stages of growth and development. Like a seed planted in the ground, most relationships, each in its own way, quickly sprout. If “watered” and “fed” through regular contact and care, these seeds can grow into healthy maturity. If neglected, they wither and can eventually die.

## Knapp's Relational Model

Communication scholar Mark Knapp developed a general way to describe the growth patterns or stages typical of most interpersonal relationships. Knapp's work can be generally applied to any interpersonal relationship, serving as a useful tool to assess whether a relationship might be “growing” or “withering.”



# "All interpersonal relationships go



## THE STAGES IN KNAPP'S RELATIONAL MODEL ARE AS FOLLOWS:

**STAGE 1: INITIATING.** During this initial stage, people introduce themselves and begin looking for commonalities. Generally, within the first few minutes of meeting, people decide whether or not they wish to move to the next stage—experimenting.



**STAGE 2: EXPERIMENTING.** During this stage, people continue to ask questions of each other in order to clarify initial perceptions. The conversation is a bit more relaxed than in the initiating stage.



**STAGE 3: INTENSIFYING.** During this stage, personal involvement is increased. People begin to express commitment, have informal or playful discussions, and may show uncertainty, all of which reflect the development of deep emotional ties.



**STAGE 4: INTEGRATING.** This stage takes place when people's lives become intertwined to the point of being shared. People in the integrating stage commonly refer to things as "ours" and influence one another's beliefs about politics, religion, and morals. They may also begin to speak alike, using "in-language" or specific words and phrases to express themselves.



**STAGE 5: BONDING.** During the bonding stage, the partnership becomes more formal and publicly recognized. Bonding signifies an increase in commitment. Examples of bonding may include a professional partnership or a marriage.

The five stages just described represent Knapp's assessment of the steps relationships typically progress through as they mature. The next five stages in Knapp's model attempt to describe, in general terms, the phases that failing relationships most often move through as they begin to dissolve.

# through stages of development."



**STAGE 6: DIFFERENTIATING.** As people begin to separate themselves from each other, they typically start by distinguishing between “we” and “I.” Although they may remain interested in and committed to the relationship, they begin to develop and pursue outside interests.



**STAGE 7: CIRCUMSCRIBING.** In this stage, partners seek to limit the time and attention devoted to nurturing the relationship. Talk is reduced to everyday matters, and controversial matters are often avoided instead of discussed.



**STAGE 8: STAGNATING.** This stage is marked by greater separation and further deterioration. During the stagnating stage, people may go through the motions of being committed, but they lack the same interest and enthusiasm that encouraged them to develop a close relationship.



**STAGE 9: AVOIDING.** When people do not want to spend any time together, they intentionally avoid one another. In this stage, not only are people emotionally separated, they also become physically separated by limiting their time together.



**STAGE 10: TERMINATING.** The final stage in Knapp’s relational model signifies the end of a relationship. The termination may be legal, perhaps marked by the ending of a business contract. Or, a relationship may be terminated for personal reasons.

The model summarized in this lesson provides insight into the various stages of growth many relationships encounter. Not all relationships reach or stay at each stage. Later lessons address ways to help nurture relationships so that they don’t experience the “withering” effects of neglect that are outlined in stages 6-10.



Match each statement to the corresponding letter of the correct word or phrase below.

- |      |   |                   |
|------|---|-------------------|
| I.10 | _____ involves asking questions of the other person in order to clarify initial perceptions | a. integrating    |
| I.11 | _____ the first stage of relationship development   | b. bonding        |
| I.12 | _____ involves an increase in personal involvement  | c. circumscribing |
| I.13 | _____ stage in which “in-language” usually emerges  | d. experimenting  |
| I.14 | _____ marked by a gradual decrease in communication, with talk reduced to everyday matters  | e. intensifying   |
| I.15 | _____ occurs when people do not want to spend time together                                 | f. initiating     |
| I.16 | _____ characterized by people who go through the motions of being committed                 | g. avoiding       |
| I.17 | _____ end of the relationship   | h. stagnating     |
| I.18 | _____ the partnership becomes more formal and publicly recognized                           | i. terminating    |



Teacher check \_\_\_\_\_

Initial

Date

## Skill-Building Activity: Applying Knapp’s Relational Model

**I.19 This activity is designed to help you use Knapp’s Relational Model to evaluate some of your own relationships. Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.**

- Think about the relationships in your life. Identify one you believe to be in one of the first five stages of Knapp’s model. Take a moment to describe this relationship. Who is the relationship with, and what is the nature of it? Identify which stage of relational development it mirrors.
- Next, list at least five things you can do to keep this relationship progressing.
- Now, identify a relationship you are in that you believe reflects one of the last five stages in Knapp’s model. For example, perhaps you’ve lost touch with a family member, or drifted apart from a friend. Explain the nature of this relationship, whom it is with, and what stage of Knapp’s model it mirrors.
- List at least five things that you can do to repair this relationship.



Teacher check \_\_\_\_\_

Initial

Date

# Fluctuations in Relationship Development

## Objectives

- Apply problem-solving strategies to interpersonal communication issues.
- Examine relationship conflicts and propose strategies to achieve conflict resolution.

## Vocabulary

**sequential** – arranged in order or succession

**relational dialectic** – competing desires or motivations that influence a relationship

**accommodate** – adapt; agree with

Knapp's model illustrates several concepts associated with the "ups and downs" of relationships. First, it demonstrates that relationships can only be at one stage at a time. In other words, a marriage cannot be at the circumscribing stage and the initiating stage. Each stage is distinct. However, as Knapp has pointed out, a relationship may evidence characteristics of several stages. A friendship that is stagnant may experience fits of intensifying; one person might ask another, "What's happened to our friendship?"

Secondly, Knapp's model also illustrates the possible movements of relationships. Relationships tend to develop or deteriorate **sequentially**. A developing relationship in the initiating stage will move to the experimenting stage rather than the circumscribing stage; a deteriorating relationship in the circumscribing stage will move to the stagnating stage rather than the bonding stage. For instance, two friends who are spending more and more time together, emotionally committing themselves to one another (i.e., integrating stage), are more likely to mature their friendship (i.e., bonding stage) than end it (i.e., terminating stage).

In addition to moving sequentially through the stages, relationships might also move from side to side. A circumscribing relationship might progress by becoming an integrating relationship; an intensifying relationship might regress by turning into a stagnating relationship.

Ronald Adler and George Rodman<sup>iii</sup> have attributed this lateral movement between stages to **relational**

**dialectics**. Relational dialectics are "opposing and continuous tensions in all relationships" which can cause difficulties. Three relational dialectics have been identified:

- Autonomy-connection
- Openness-privacy
- Novelty-predictability

**Autonomy-Connection.** The autonomy-connection dialectical tension involves a person's desire to preserve elements of his or her independence, even while remaining connected to friends and family members.

When a person perceives that a relationship is limiting his or her independence, he or she may feel suffocated. This may occur on a number of levels. Friends who spend a weekend camping together might balance out their need for independence by not seeing each other for a couple of weeks. Spouses who see each other every night might prefer not to meet for lunch. Co-workers who work side-by-side on a project might not want to hang out on the weekends. If one person perceives an imbalance, it may cause a relationship to deteriorate.

**Novelty-Predictability.** Novelty-predictability involves the tension between a desire for the unfamiliar and a desire for the routine. Routines or rituals, such as eating dinner at a specific time, saying good-bye with a hug, or playing softball every Saturday, offer stability to relationships. However, too much predictability can

# “Relationships that are not cultivated will deteriorate.”

lead to boredom. Novelty can spice up a relationship. For instance, a husband and wife who spend most of their weekends at home might avoid elements of circumscribing or stagnating by taking each other on surprise vacations. Friends who go bowling every Thursday night might decide to go hang-gliding instead.

**Openness-Privacy.** The third dialectic tension is openness-privacy. This tension involves the desire for openness versus the desire for privacy. Close relationships are characterized by mutual self-disclosure. However, unrestrained openness is not necessary to a close relationship’s maintenance or growth. For instance, a girl might feel the need to tell another friend about her problems with money, but she might refuse to answer questions regarding her relationship with her mother. Similarly, a woman might not feel comfortable discussing personal issues at work, but she would most likely talk to her husband about those same personal struggles at home. While it is best to be open in relationships, people must respect each other’s need for privacy.

## Maintaining Close Relationships

Maintaining close relationships requires effort. Close relationships that are not cultivated will deteriorate. People must be understanding, accommodating, honest, and open about their feelings in order to deal with challenges in a relationship.

To understand someone we care about, we must identify with the other person’s perspective. We should try to see things as he or she sees them, offer support through actively listening, and not rush to judge. To actively listen, we must pay close attention to what he or she has to say, ignore distractions, ask relevant questions, show support, and cautiously give advice.

Close relationships involve the interaction of two imperfect people. Imperfect people can make mistakes and act selfishly. Therefore, do not be surprised if conflict occurs even among happily married people. Conflict can be healthy at times and should not be avoided. However, it should be handled maturely, using biblical truths, prayer, and the conflict resolution strategies described below.

When at odds with a person, we should seek to be accommodating. This does not mean that we should lie or agree to something that we think is wrong. We can **accommodate** by seeking common ground. We should listen to what a person has to say and then emphasize that with which we agree. Communicate a spirit of accommodation by using vocal tones that are pleasing and calming rather than antagonistic or angry. Other nonverbal behavior, such as open and relaxed body posture, also helps to ease tension and convey agreement. We should work within the bounds of agreement without compromising biblical principles.



# REPAIRING a Relationship

- **Recognize**
- **Engage**
- **Pose**
- **Affirm**
- **Integrate**
- **Risk**



Honesty and openness tend to be the hallmarks of close relationships. However, honesty and openness should not ignore context, the individuals involved, and the history of the relationship. Competent communicators always strive to be honest, while being sensitive to another's feelings. For example, if we begin to share an experience that was hurtful, but our friend's mind wanders and we know he or she is not listening, we could get angry and point out that our friend is being rude. Instead, we could tell our friend that the experience really hurt, and we need him or her to hear what we are saying. This way, we are being honest without causing unnecessary damage to the relationship. Instead of attacking the friend, we explained our need.

In Unit 1, you learned the importance of self-disclosure to the development of relationships. Revealing thoughts and feelings to a friend or spouse can facilitate relational growth. The more you disclose, the more your friend is likely to self-disclose. However, self-disclosing inappropriately can be damaging to a relationship. For instance, telling our darkest secrets to a new friend might cause him or her to want to exit the relationship. Self-disclosure should grow with the relationship.

## Conflict Resolution

At one time or another, a relationship will need repair due to tensions or conflicts. As aids to repair a rela-

tionship, communication scholar Joseph DeVito<sup>9</sup> suggests the following tactics (notice that the tactics form the acronym: REPAIR):

**Recognize.** To improve any situation, we must first recognize or identify the source of difficulty. Recognizing involves examination of communication problems and motivations by asking questions such as, "Are both people failing to take the other's perspective? Are we being unreasonable and self-centered in our expectations?"

**Engage.** Once we have recognized the problem, it is then imperative that we engage in conversation to discover a resolution that is amicable to both parties. One person cannot effect reconciliation; it takes two. We can choose to respond in one of five ways:

1. **My way** – This will cause further conflict until the other person gives up.
2. **No way** – Everyone withdraws and ignores the problem. It will resurface to cause problems in the future.
3. **Your way** – We give in to the other person. While this may make peace, it won't solve the source of the difficulty.
4. **Halfway** – A compromise can work among many people. However, there will still be some unresolved issues between the people in conflict.

# “Conflicts never resolve themselves.”

5. **Our way** – This is the only resolution that causes the parties to face the difficulty and mutually agree on a solution. In this way, no one “gives in.” Instead, all agree on the cause and the solution and participate in healing the wounds. Note: The Biblical Connection Project in Unit 2 expands the discussion of “Our Way” by connecting it to God’s way.

**Pose.** DeVito’s next step in relationship repair asks you to pose some reasonable solutions. Do not offer suggestions that are self-serving. Seek the person’s good as well as your own. Conflicts never resolve themselves. It is good to set the mood of the discussion by selecting the time and place that will be most conducive to a positive, fair resolution.

**Affirm.** Focus on a person’s good points. Affirm his or her importance. This will help you have a better attitude toward the person and the relationship. When you are uneasy about where a discussion might go, it is easy to slip into a defensive mode.

**Integrate.** Once we have decided on measures for repair, we should strive to make them a part of our normal behavior. This can be difficult because it is much easier to fall back into old behavior patterns than to integrate new ones. We need to make a pact with our partners to put off unloving behavior and put on loving, supportive behavior.

**Risk.** When attempting to repair a relationship, we might feel as if we are the only one who cares. We might feel as if we have more at risk than a person who might not be working as hard at the relationship. We need to remind ourselves that close relationships come at a high price, but the rewards outweigh the costs.

If a resolution is not found immediately, don’t give up. It might be good to seek advice from someone both parties trust. It may take the interaction of a neutral party to bring about a resolution. Remember, it is a biblical and beneficial thing to seek the resolution of a conflict.





**Fill in the blanks with answers from the text.**

- I.20 According to Knapp's Model of Relationship Development, a single relationship may evidence \_\_\_\_\_ of several stages.
- I.21 A relationship tends to develop or deteriorate \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I.22 The \_\_\_\_\_ dialectical tension involves a person's desire to be independent as well as connected.
- I.23 \_\_\_\_\_ involves the tension between a desire for the unfamiliar and a desire for the routine.
- I.24 \_\_\_\_\_ involves the desire for mutual self-disclosure versus the desire for privacy.
- I.25 The maintenance of close relationships involves \_\_\_\_\_, accommodation, and \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I.26 When at odds with a communication partner, seek to be \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I.27 \_\_\_\_\_ can facilitate relational growth.
- I.28 Do not \_\_\_\_\_ more of your communication partner than he or she is willing to give.
- I.29 According to Joseph DeVito, we must first \_\_\_\_\_ or identify the source of difficulty to improve any situation.
- I.30 It is much easier to fall back into old behavior patterns than to \_\_\_\_\_ new ones.
- I.31 Once we have recognized the problem, it is then imperative that we \_\_\_\_\_ in conversation to discover a resolution that is amicable to both parties.



Teacher check \_\_\_\_\_

Initial

Date

# Review for Self Test

Read the section review that follows and look over the objectives and problems in this section to prepare for Self Test 1. If you did not complete the problems successfully or are not sure about the information that relates to each objective, review the material again.

When you are ready, take Self Test 1. The Self Test will check your understanding of this section. Any items you miss on this test will show you what areas you need to restudy.

## Types of Interpersonal Relationships

In this lesson, you looked at two main categories of interpersonal relationships: personal-social relationships and professional-functional relationships. You learned to recognize the differences between these categories and noted that personal-social relationships primarily involve communication with family members and friends, while professional-functional relationships involve communication with employers, employees, clients, and the general public. Having completed this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Identify and analyze types of interpersonal relationships and their purposes.**

## Relationship Stages

This lesson introduced you to Knapp's Relational Model and its description of general patterns of relationship development and deterioration. An understanding of the model may assist you in considering the health of relationships in your own life. Having completed this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Identify and analyze stages in an interpersonal relationship, based on Knapp's Relational Model.**

## Fluctuations in Relationship Development

In this lesson, you learned strategies that will help you avoid and/or solve problems that occur in interpersonal communications. You also learned about approaches to mending damaged or broken relationships. Having completed this lesson, you should be better prepared to:

- **Apply problem-solving strategies to interpersonal communication issues.**
- **Examine relationship conflicts and propose strategies to achieve conflict resolution.**

# Self Test 1

Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the word list below (3 points for each blank).

avoiding	develop	initiating	relational dialectics
bonding	differentiating	integrating	stagnating
circumscribing	experimenting	intensifying	terminating
deteriorate	flexible	Knapp's model	

- I.01 According to \_\_\_\_\_ of relationship development, a single relationship may evidence characteristics of several stages.
- I.02 The \_\_\_\_\_ stage involves asking questions of the other person to clarify initial perceptions.
- I.03 \_\_\_\_\_ is the stage in which “in-language” usually emerges.
- I.04 The \_\_\_\_\_ stage involves an increase in personal involvement.
- I.05 \_\_\_\_\_ is the first stage of relationship development.
- I.06 A relationship tends to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ sequentially.
- I.07 The \_\_\_\_\_ stage is marked by a gradual decrease in communication, with talk reduced to everyday matters.
- I.08 When at odds with a communication partner, it is important to be \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I.09 \_\_\_\_\_ occurs when people do not want to spend time together.
- I.010 The \_\_\_\_\_ stage is characterized by people who go through the motions of being committed.
- I.011 The \_\_\_\_\_ stage marks the end of a relationship.

- I.012 During the \_\_\_\_\_ stage, the relationship is formally and publicly recognized.
- I.013 \_\_\_\_\_ is the stage at which people begin to distinguish between “we” and “I.”
- I.014 Ronald Adler and George Rodman<sup>vi</sup> have attributed lateral movement between relationship development stages to \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Match each statement to the corresponding letter of the correct word or phrase below**  
(3 points each).

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| I.015 _____ involves a person’s desire to be independent as well as connected                     | a. autonomy-connection     |
| I.016 _____ involves the tension between a desire for the unfamiliar and a desire for the routine | b. family                  |
| I.017 _____ involves the desire for openness versus the desire for privacy                        | c. novelty-predictability  |
| I.018 _____ relationships that are primarily goal or task-oriented                                | d. openness-privacy        |
| I.019 _____ the type of relationship between a brother and sister                                 | e. personal-social         |
| I.020 _____ can facilitate relational growth  | f. professional-client     |
| I.021 _____ characterized by availability, caring, honesty, confidentiality, loyalty, and empathy | g. professional-functional |
| I.022 _____ purpose is to render and receive services   | h. self-disclosure         |
| I.023 _____ basic unit of society   | i. true friendship         |

**Circle the letter of the correct answer** (3 points each).

- I.024 What is the first step in DeVito's strategies for repairing relationships?
- a. Relationship
  - b. Rejuvenation
  - c. Recognize
  - d. Repair
- I.025 Why is conversation important to relationship repair?
- a. It enables the two people to argue more.
  - b. It enables the two people to discover a resolution.
  - c. It enables the person in the right to focus on the other person's faults.
  - d. People need to show their aggressions toward one another.
- I.026 Why is it difficult to integrate new behavior patterns into a relationship?
- a. People don't want to change.
  - b. It is easier to fall back into old behavior patterns than integrate new ones.
  - c. People respond differently to new behavior.
  - d. All of the above
- I.027 When a wife might not feel comfortable discussing her personal problems at work, but she might talk to her husband about the more private struggles she is experiencing, what relational dialectic tension is she experiencing?
- a. Autonomy-Connection
  - b. Novelty-Predictability
  - c. Openness-Privacy
- I.028 In relational dialectics, what tension involves a person's desire to be independent as well as connected?
- a. Autonomy-Connection
  - b. Novelty-Predictability
  - c. Openness-Privacy
- I.029 This relational dialectic tension happens when a person is pushed to disclose more than he or she is willing, causing withdrawal.
- a. Autonomy-Connection
  - b. Novelty-Predictability
  - c. Openness-Privacy
- I.030 In relational dialectics, what tension is caused by a struggle between a desire for the unfamiliar and a desire for the routine?
- a. Autonomy-Connection
  - b. Novelty-Predictability
  - c. Openness-Privacy



Teacher check

Score

Initial

Date