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# Inspiring Guide for Learn to Learn

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# Communication Theory and Techniques



Image: The Simpsons Show, Matt Groening



# Communication Theory and Techniques

- Iceberg-Model (Sigmund Freud)
- Johari-Window (Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham)
- Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne)
- 4 Sides of a Message (Friedemann Schulz von Thun)
  
- Active listening
- Paraphrasing
- Questioning Techniques
- Constructive Feedback



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# Iceberg-Model (Sigmund Freud)



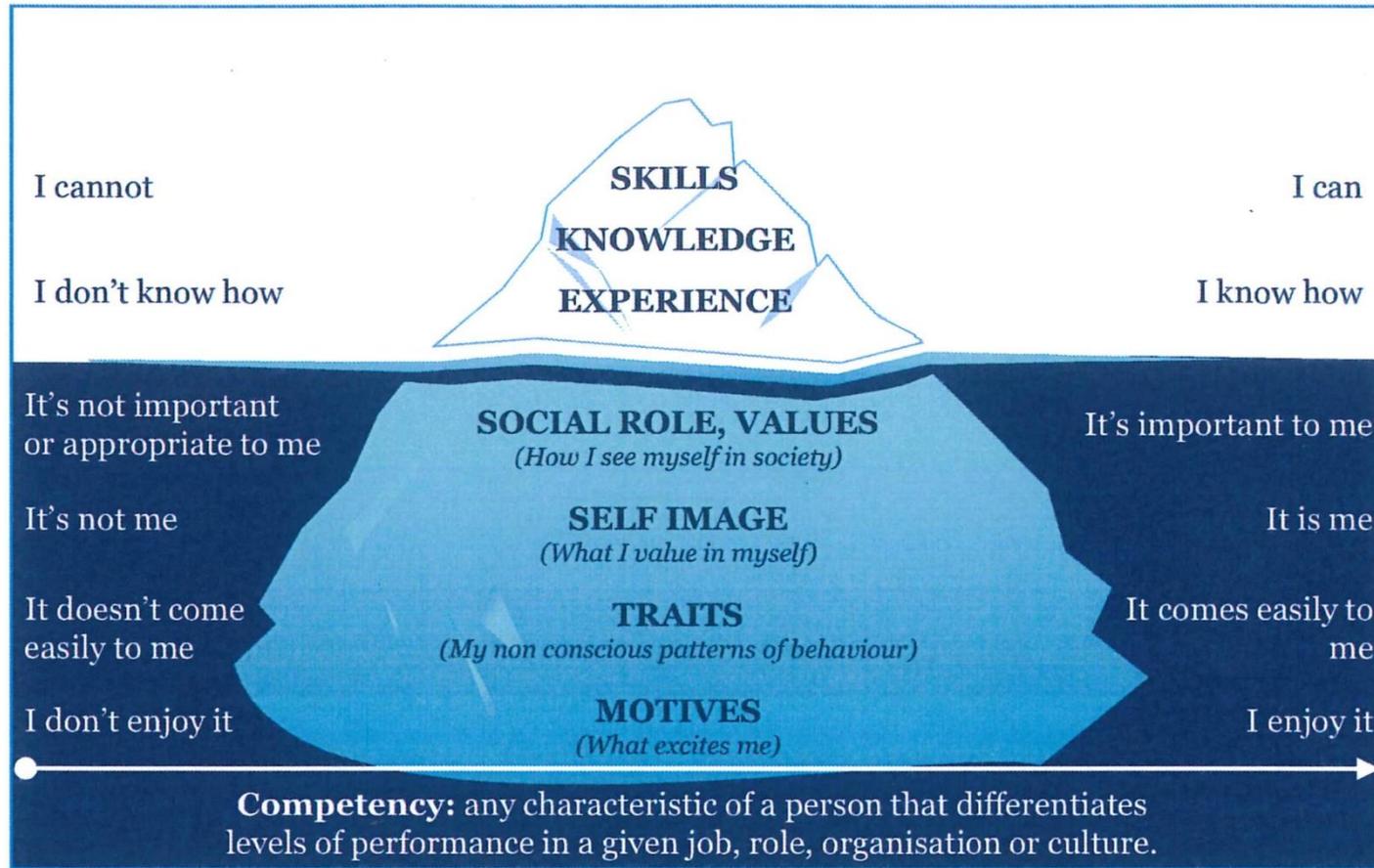
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# Iceberg-Model





# Iceberg-Model

There are many personal characteristics that influence what we do: skills, knowledge, social role, self image, traits and motives. These various characteristics exist at different levels of consciousness. You can think of these characteristics as being levels of an iceberg.

The most conscious ones are those above water on the visible tip of the iceberg, while the characteristics that are less conscious or unconscious are below water, on the submerged part of the iceberg.

The characteristics of which you are most conscious are your knowledge and skills, depicted as the tip of the iceberg. Skills represent what you can do and knowledge is what you know, including your experience of things and situations.



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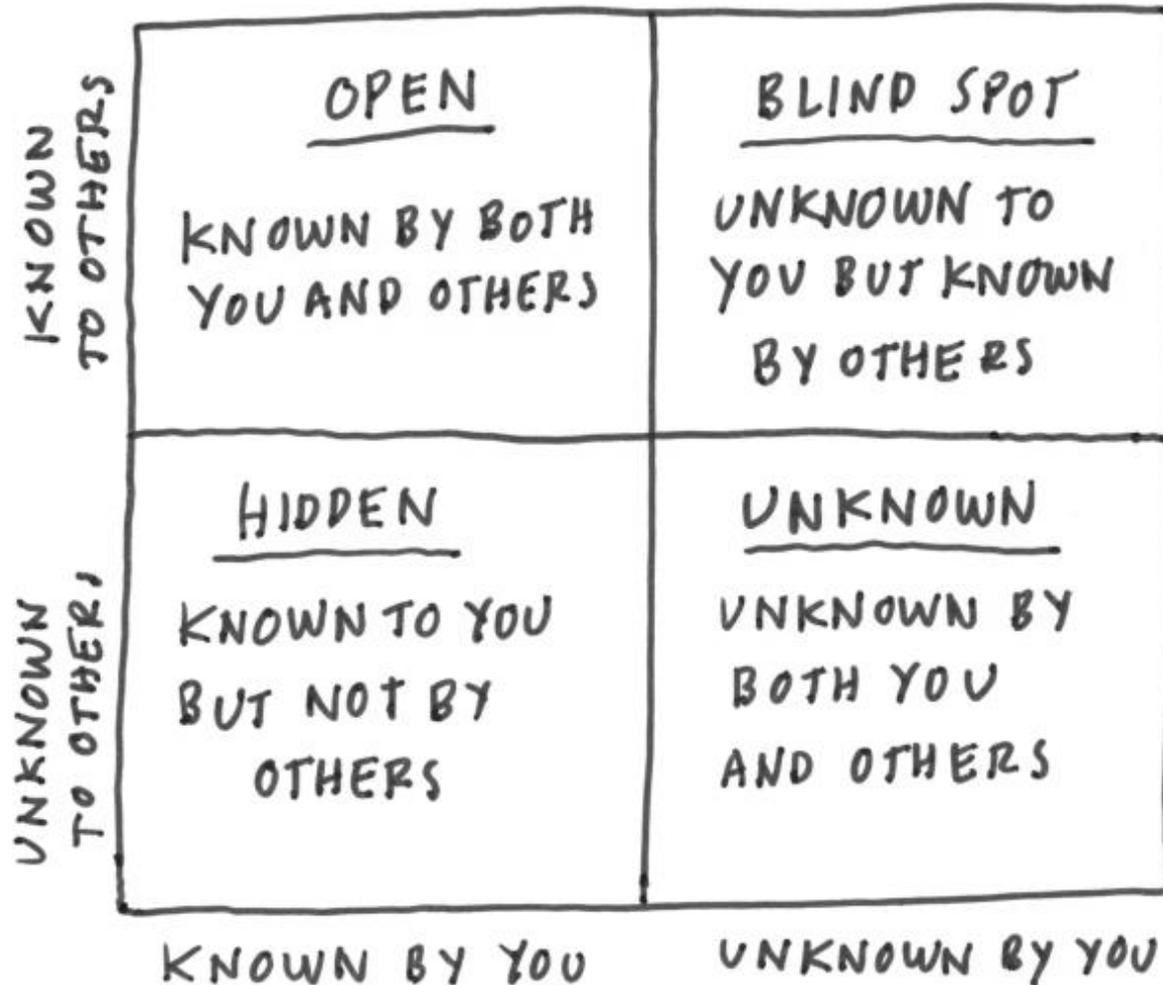


# Johari-Window (Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham)





# THE JOHARI WINDOW





# The Johari Window

The Johari window is a technique that helps people better understand their relationship with themselves and others. It was created by psychologists Joseph Luft (1916–2014) and Harrington Ingham (1916–1995) in 1955.

In the exercise, subjects pick a number of adjectives from a list, choosing ones they feel describe their own personality. The subject's peers then get the same list, and each picks an equal number of adjectives that describe the subject. These adjectives are then inserted into a two-by-two grid of four cells.

## The four quadrants:

### **Open, or Arena**

Adjectives that both the subject and peers select go in this cell (or quadrant) of the grid. These are traits that subject and peers perceive.

### **Hidden, or Façade**

Adjectives selected by the subject, but not by any of their peers, go in this quadrant. These are things the peers are either unaware of, or that are untrue but for the subject's claim.

### **Blind Spot**

Adjectives not selected by subjects, but only by their peers go here. These represent what others perceive but the subject does not.

### **Unknown**

Adjectives that neither subject nor peers selected go here. They represent subject's behaviors or motives that no one participating recognizes—either because they do not apply or because of collective ignorance of these traits.



# The Johari Window

**A Johari window uses the following 56 adjectives as possible descriptions of the participant:**

Able, accepting, adaptable, bold, brave, calm, caring, cheerful, clever, complex, confident, dependable, dignified, empathetic, energetic, extroverted, friendly, giving, happy, helpful, idealistic, independent, ingenious, intelligent, introverted, kind, knowledgeable, logical, loving, mature, modest, nervous, observant, organized, patient, powerful, proud, quiet, reflective, relaxed, religious, responsive, searching, self-assertive, self-conscious, sensible, sentimental, shy, silly, spontaneous, sympathetic, tense, trustworthy, warm, wise, witty.



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# Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne)





# Transactional Analysis

## Parent-Ego State

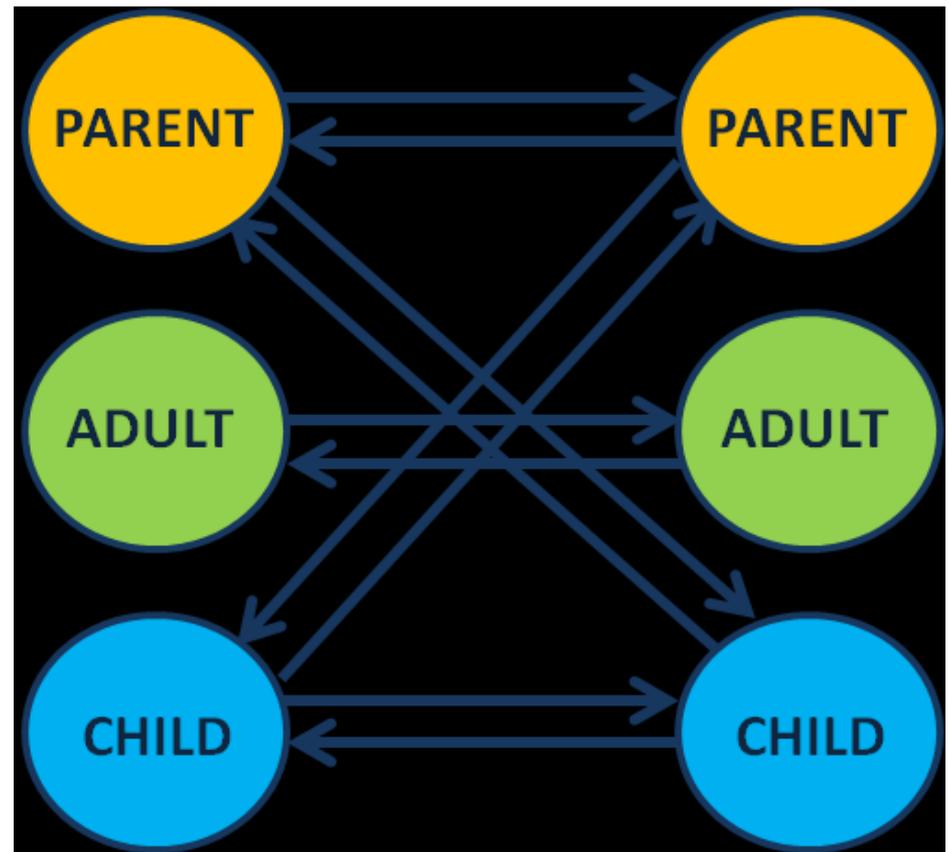
Behaviours, thoughts and feelings copied from parents or parent-figures.

## Adult-Ego State

Behaviours, thoughts and feelings which are direct responses to the here and now.

## Child-Ego State

Behaviours, thoughts and feelings replayed from childhood.





# Transactional Analysis

At any given time, you can be operating as an adult, a parent, or a child.

When you're operating as an adult, that means you think and determine things in the now, external and internal factors, all that. You're putting things together and contextualizing. This is good.

When you're operating as a parent, you're essentially acting or using behaviors that your parents gave you (or some parental figure gave you). Your "parent" is basically the external factors of your childhood writ large. There's a lot of stuff here like "always" and "never" and "these are the rules." (Point being: you can run from your childhood as much as you want, but it'll always be somewhere nearby.)

When you're operating as a child, you're expressing feelings and thoughts from when you literally were a child. So if someone criticizes you at work, you get petulant instead of understanding it in the bigger picture of things (as an adult would).



# Transactional Analysis

## Applying Parent-Adult-Child to day to day life

**Parent:** Someone in Parent may use body language that is angry or impatient such as finger-pointing, fist-clenching, "in your face". The language of the Parent may be judgmental, critical or patronizing.

**Adult:** You can tell that someone is in their Adult when they are show interest and pay attention, they are not defensive or need to be threatening in any way. A conversation with someone in Adult is reasonable, straight-forward and oriented towards solving problems. They tend to ask for information before forming opinions, such as asking "why", "what", "how", "who", "where" and "when". Individuals working from Adult use logic statements - true, false, probably, possibly. They don't force their opinions on you as if talking to a child but will offer their own thoughts in a non-dogmatic way: "I think", "I realize", "I see", "I believe".

**Child:** An individual who is in their Child often behaves more emotionally than they do at other times, which could be sad, angry, despairing, fearful, depressed. They may use the body language of a child, such as squirming, giggling, whining, shrugging, teasing. There are many phrases that point to the Child being present, the person tends to use simple language such as "I want", "I need", "I don't care", "don't know".

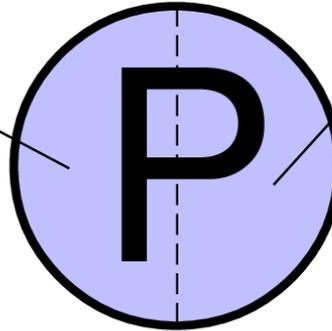
Remember: when you are trying to identify ego states words are only part of the overall message. 55% is body language, 38% of meaning is intonation.



## The Transactional Analysis Parent-Adult-Child Model

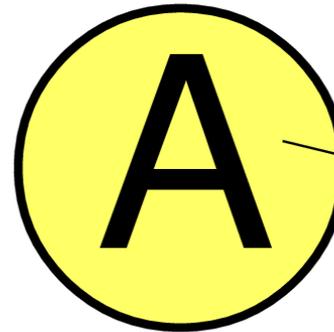
### Critical Parent

Monitors adherence to rules, shoulds and musts, and expectations of self and others. Largely automatic.



### Nurturing Parent

Voice of unconditional acceptance, hope, and optimism. The source of self-soothing and self-recognition

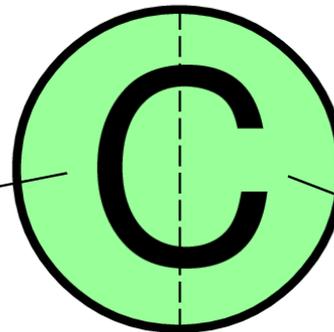


### Adult

The planner, observer, organizer, and analyzer. The part of self that can think logically and rationally and act accordingly.

### Adaptive Child

The part of self that makes emotional decisions about self and the world based on past and present drivers, injunctions, biology, and environment.



### Free Child

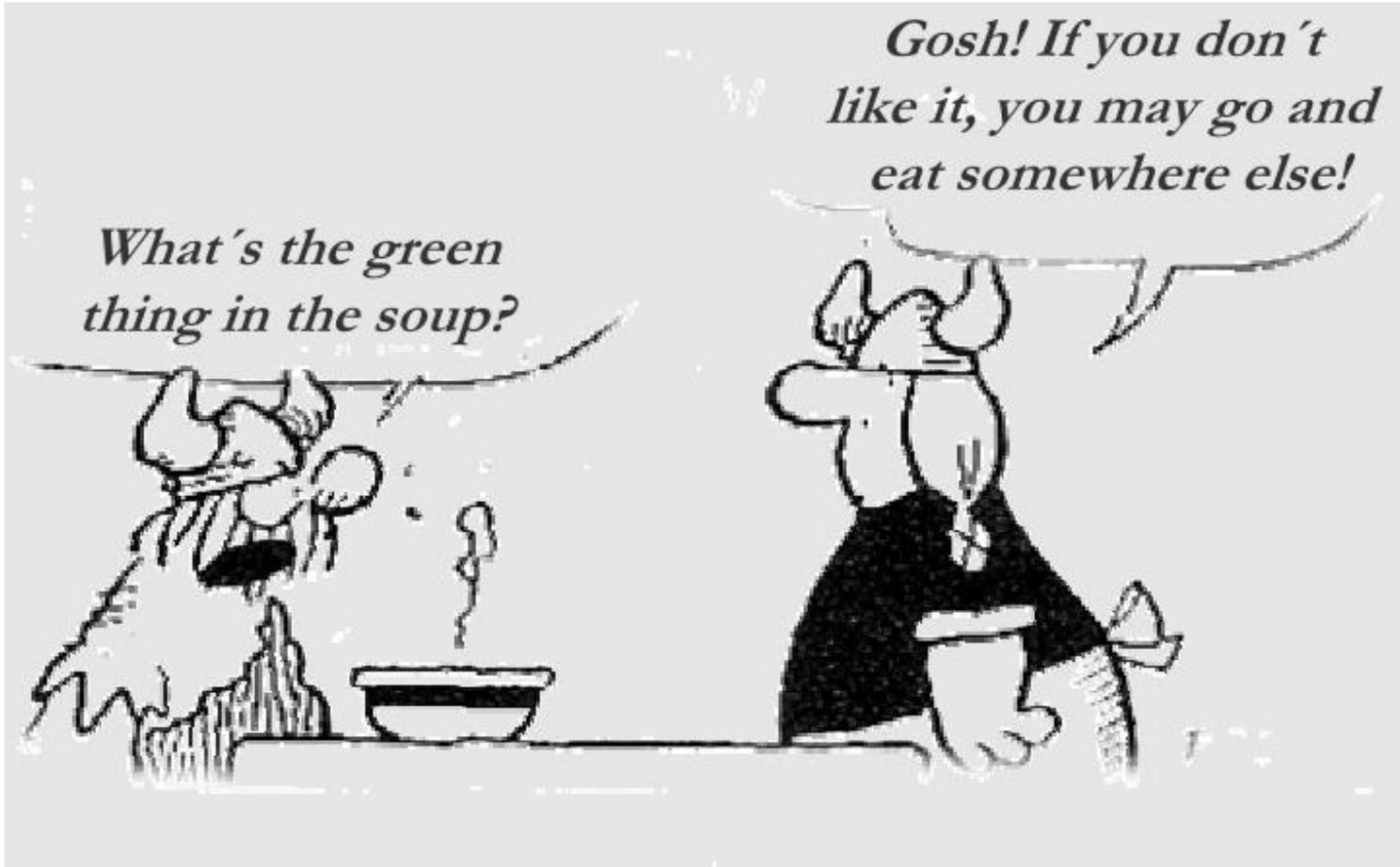
The spontaneous, emotive, creative, and in-the-moment part of self.



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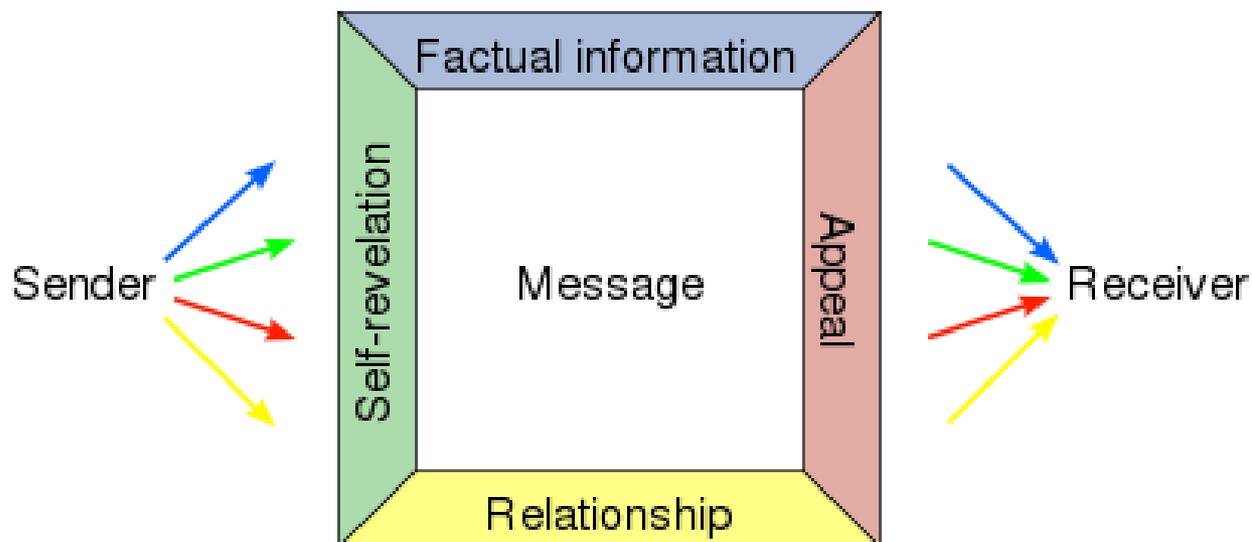
# 4 Sides of a Message (Friedemann Schulz von Thun)





## 4 sides of a message

The four-sides model (also known as communication square or four-ears model) is a communication model by Friedemann Schulz von Thun. According to this model every message has four facets though not the same emphasis might be put on each.





# 4 Sides of a Message

## **Factual information**

Statements which are matter of fact like data and facts or new information.

## **Self-revealing**

The speaker - conscious or not intended - tells something about himself, his motives, values, emotions.

## **Relationship**

Expression on how the sender gets along with the receiver and what he thinks of him.

## **Appeal/Demand**

Desire, advice, instruction and effects that the speaker is seeking for.





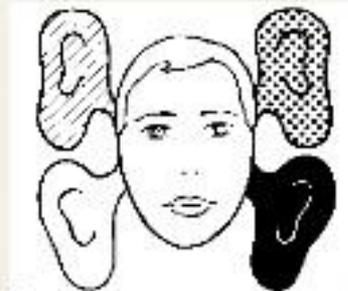
# 4 Sides of a Message

He is impatient.  
He is annoyed.

He is showing  
superiority over me.  
OR  
He wants to help  
me.

**Self-  
revelation**

**Factual  
content**



**Relationship**

**Appeal**

He wants to  
inform: the traffic  
light turned  
indeed green.

He is saying:  
Concentrate! Start  
driving! Hurry up!





# 4 Sides of a Message

## **Exercise:**

Which ear is your strong ear?

Let's make a small test.

Please choose your answer spontaneously. What would be the probable answer for you. (There is no right or wrong or best answer).



## 4 Sides of a Message

**You are standing in line at the bakery – quite a while. Finally it is your turn and you quickly say, what you want to buy. The salesgirl frowns and says: "Take it slow! It's a hectic day."**

- A.** You agree with her that there's a lot going on today.
- B.** You're annoyed that the salesgirl treats you so unkindly instead of hurrying.
- C.** You tell the salesgirl you're in no hurry.
- D.** You imagine that it must be really stressful to be in her place.



## 4 Sides of a Message

**A colleague with whom you have a rather distanced relationship comes into your office and says: “Oi, that's pretty stuffy (stinky, bad air) here.”**

- A.** You agree: That is possible. We didn't have the window open today.
- B.** Your colleague seems to be asking you to open a window.
- C.** You have the impression that fresh air is very important to your colleague.
- D.** You think that if he doesn't like it here, he can leave.



## 4 Sides of a Message

**You come home tired and exhausted on a warm summer evening after a long working day. Your partner asks you: “Hi, you want to take a shower first?”**

**He/she is trying to say:**

**A.** that you smell bad.

**B.** that he/she cares about your well-being and hopes that a shower will do you good.

**C.** that a shower is refreshing after an exhausting day.

**D.** to go take a shower.



## 4 Sides of a Message

**You're sitting at your breakfast table at home reading up on something on your smartphone. After a while, your partner asks the question: "Tell me, what's so interesting to read?"**

**You answer:**

- A.** Do you mind me reading?
- B.** I'm just reading the news.
- C.** Can't I take a short look on my cell phone without you questioning me?
- D.** Okay, I'm almost done.



## 4 Sides of a Message

**In a meeting that focuses on improving workflows, you argue for a more flexible division of tasks. Mr. Meier, an older colleague, vehemently rejects the idea: "That is impossible. There will be total chaos."**

- A. You are annoyed that your colleague has so disregarded your proposal.
- B. You are trying to change the proposal in such a way that Mr. Meier is satisfied with the solution.
- C. You explain again the advantages of your solution.
- D. You notice that Mr. Meier attaches great importance to precise regulations and try to understand which concerns he has.



# 4 Sides of a Message

## **Exercise:**

1. Group yourself in your „strong ear“-preferences.
2. Discuss in your group the example and questions from the work sheet (not more than 10 min).
3. Think of more examples from your own life.
4. Choose one example from your own life and prepare a small role play. (max. another 10 min).
5. When finished present your role play and give some comments about it, as you were discussing before.



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# Communication Techniques

1. Active listening
2. Paraphrase and Summarize
3. Questioning Techniques
4. Constructive Feedback



# 1. Active Listening

Active Listening as a technique was first described by Carl Rogers (1902-1987).

Communicating and understanding each other is harder than you think. Communication theory understands people as "operationally closed systems". Such self-contained systems only hear and understand what they want to understand. Understanding is therefore always only an approximation of what has been said.

However, active listening increases the likelihood of understanding.

Active listening includes:

- Empathic listening – show your counterpart, that you are “all ears”.
- Paraphrase key statements – make sure you understand correctly (factual information).
- Verbalize Emotions – make sure you understand how your counterpart feels (self-revelation).



# 1. Active Listening

Active listening is only successful if you are seriously interested in what the other person says. This should also be explicitly signaled to the opposite side.

Active listening requires:

- Eye contacts to detect non-verbal signals
- Patience to let the other one finish talking
- Restraint, neither to agree too quickly ("yes, I understand..."), nor to disagree too quickly ("yes, but...")
- Care and cautious affirmation ("have I understood you correctly...").



Pay attention



Look at who is  
talking



Do not talk

---

# ACTIVE LISTENING

---



Ask questions



Follow  
directions



Visualise what  
is being said

@rlj1981



## 2. Paraphrasing and Summarizing

### 2.a) Paraphrasing and summarizing (factual information).

- Verify information.
- Demonstrate engagement in the conversation.

### 2.b) Paraphrasing and summarizing (conveyed feelings of the speaker, self- revelation).

- Verify if you understand your counterpart's feelings correctly.
- Demonstrate understanding and empathy.





## 2. Paraphrasing and Summarizing

How do you do it?

- Use phrases such as
  - “What I’m hearing is...”
  - “It sounds like you are saying...”
  - “It sounds like you are feeling worried...”
  - “I understand you are having trouble with...”
- Do not repeat the person’s exact words!
- Avoid phrases like “I know what you mean.”





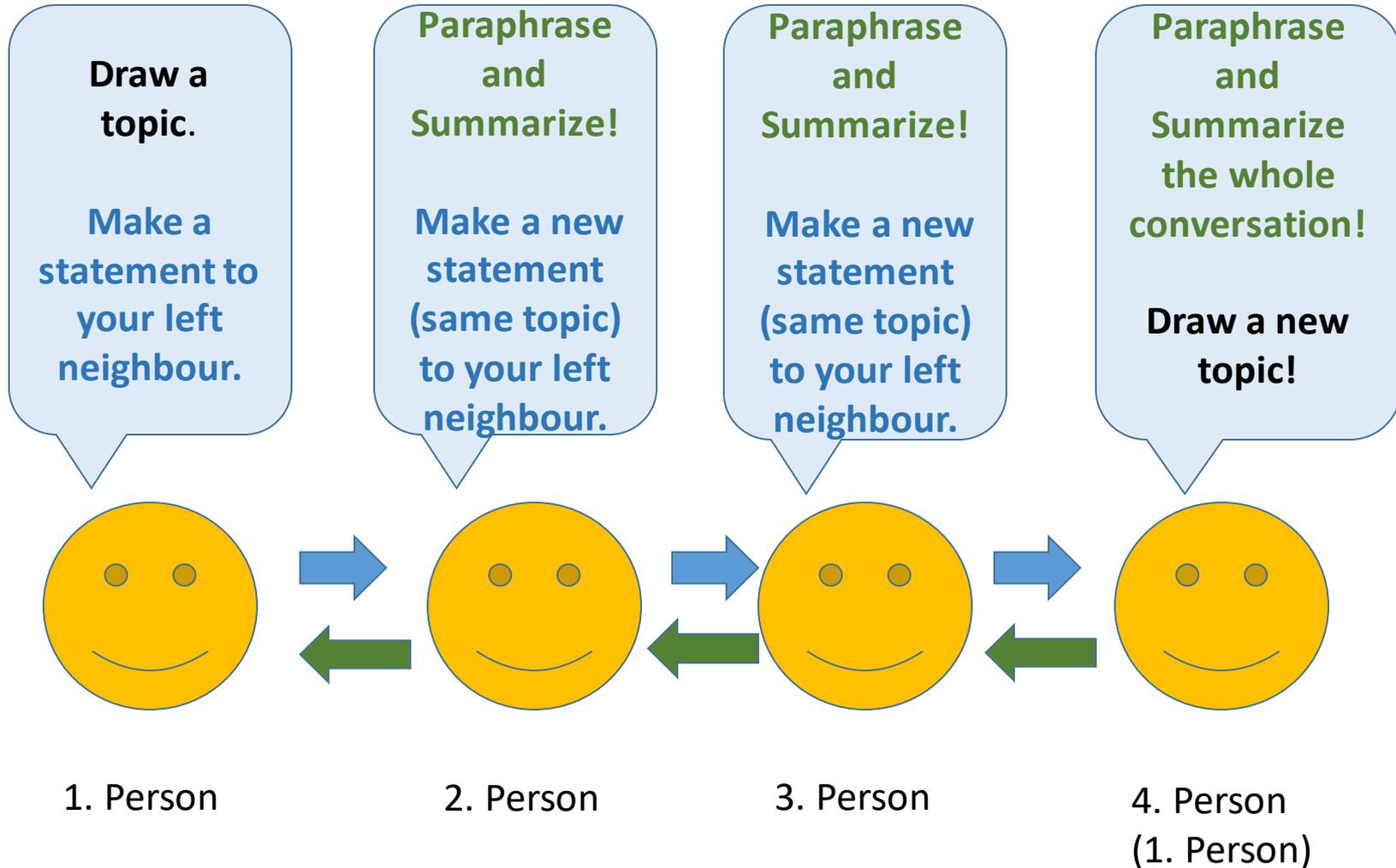
# Summarize Conversation

- Throughout the conversation, periodically summarize what has been said.
- Summarizing gives your counterpart an opportunity to correct information that you may have misunderstood.





# Exercise: Controlled dialogue chain





# Exercise: Controlled dialogue chain

## **Make a statement on one topic:**

*What is the best way to brew and drink coffee?*

*Is it better to take the car or public transportation?*

*What is the better pet: Cat or dog?*

*Social media or face to face?*

*Vacation destinations – city or nature?*



# Questioning techniques

Asking questions is an instrument of conversation that guides the perception. Depending on the goal of the conversation, different types of questions are used. Basically, one distinguishes:

| Open questions  | Closed questions   |
|---|--|
| Open questions elicit longer answers. An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings. | A closed question usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. For example, "Are you thirsty?" The answer is "Yes" or "No"; "Where do you live?" The answer is generally the name of your town or your address. |



# Questioning techniques

Open questions usually begin with **what, why, how**. "**Tell me**" and "**describe**" can also be used in the same way as open questions.

*What happened at the meeting?*

*Why did he react that way?*

*How was the party?*

*Tell me what happened next.*

*Describe the circumstances in more detail.*

## **Open questions are good for:**

- Developing an open conversation: "What did you get up to on vacation?"
- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"
- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

## **Closed questions are good for:**

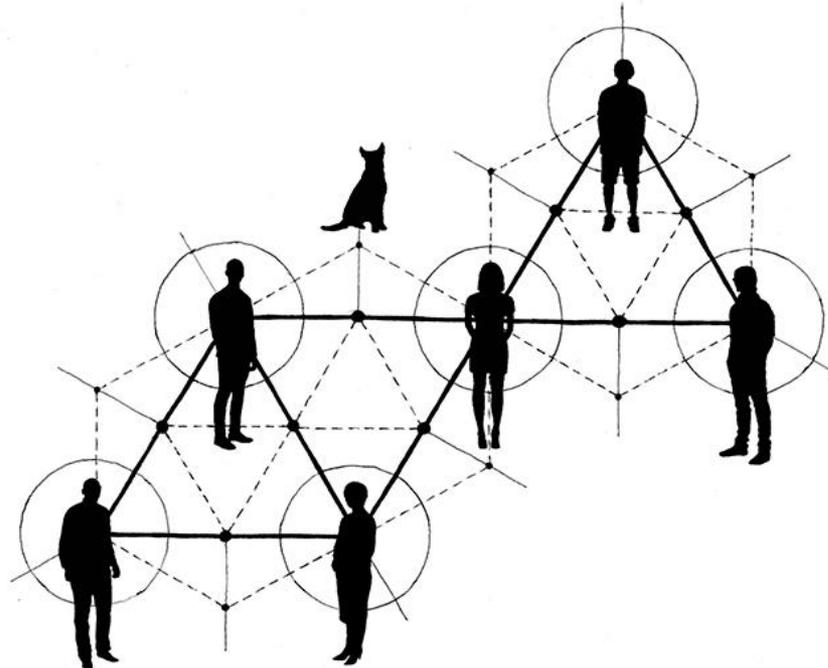
- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"
- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"
- Frame setting: "Are you happy with the service from your bank?"



# Systemic Questions

...are open questions.

They reveal more  
details about the  
bigger picture/the  
„system“ your tutee  
is in.





# Systemic Questions

## Circular questions

*Suppose your best friend was here now, what would she say?*

*If a stranger came by now, how would he or she experience the situation?*

*How do you think your parents would feel if they heard that?*



# Systemic Questions

## Solution-oriented questions

*Are there periods in which the problem does not occur?*

*What is different in these periods?*



# Systemic Questions

## Scalability questions

*On a scale from 1 to 10, let's say that 10 is "I will do everything I can to improve the situation" and 0 is "I very much hope that the situation improves but will not do anything about it".*

*Where are you today on this scale? Where are your intentions? Where do you want to go? What do you have to do to move up a point?*



# Systemic Questions

## Hypothetical questions/ „Wunderfragen“

*What if you had one magical wish?*

*If your objective were already achieved, how would your situation look then? How would it have changed?*

*Let's say that you decide to do things differently next time. What effects would that have?*



# Systemic Questions

## Resource questions

*What can you do well? What are your hobbies?*

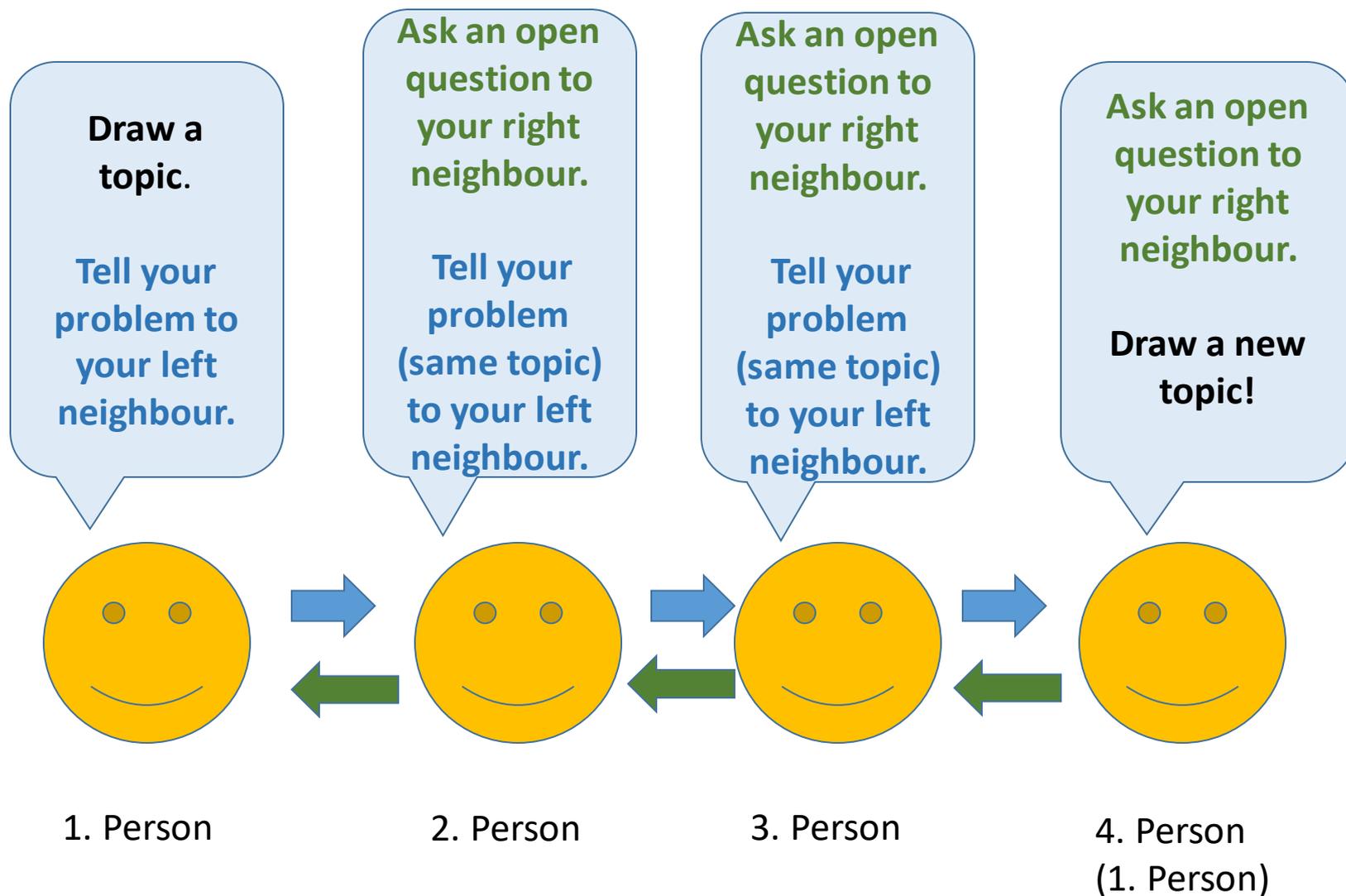
*How can you build on your strengths?*

*What should stay as it is? What do you want to keep?*

*Who is your most useful colleague at the moment?*



# Exercise: Controlled dialogue chain





# Exercise: Controlled dialogue chain

## Tell your problem:

*The weather makes you sick, because...*

*You never have time for yourself, because...*

*You have problems with your health, because...*

*Your boss annoys you, because...*

*You can't motivate yourself to do sports, because...*



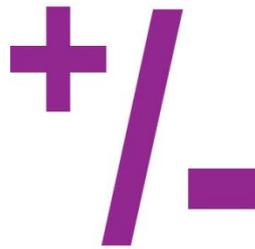
# Constructive Feedback



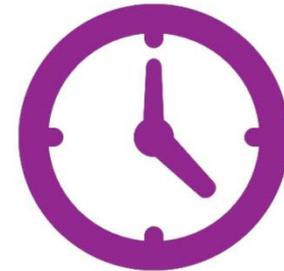
Talk from the  
I perspective



Give suggestions  
for change



Give positive and  
negative feedback



Talk about recent  
occurrences



# Constructive Feedback

- Be positive!
- Be respectful and appreciative!
- Remember your Tutee is the expert for his/her life.
- He/she knows, what is best for him.
- Give qualitative feedback
- Make an assessment FOR learning instead of assessment OF learning.



# Constructive Feedback

## **Feed-up** (goal dimension):

The goal of the learning process must be clear to the learner and must also appear meaningful, relevant and challenging.

It is important to communicate learning objectives clear and directly.

## **Feed-back** (diagnostic dimension):

At this level, the learner must be made aware of where he or she stands in relation to the learning objective (feed-up).

## **Feed-Forward:**

What does the individual learner need in order to work towards the learning goal or to think ahead?



# Sources and useful links for further information

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