

### Workbook Assignment

### *Feeling Another's Feelings*

### Overview

This lesson focuses on the importance of two people being sensitive to one another's needs. When people demonstrate understanding for each other's feelings they develop empathy. Empathy is related to the quality of a lasting relationship.

### Objectives

- ◆ Participants will analyze the need for genuine caring within a relationship.
- ◆ Participants will examine the importance of empathy as it is expressed between people.
- ◆ Participants will determine ways of showing empathy to someone they care about.

### Vocabulary

caring  
genuine

empathy  
priority

### Key Concepts

- People demonstrate genuine caring in different ways.
- Being sensitive to and understanding of another's feelings, situation and motives is called *empathy*.
- The quality of a relationship is increased when couples are empathic toward one another.
- Two important areas for skill building are: improving one's ability to listen attentively, and making the other person a priority.

### Preparation for Lesson

#### Instructor will need:

- White unlined inexpensive letter envelopes (6 1/2" x 3 5/8" size), one per class member, 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper cut into 12 pieces. Participants will need the same number of paper pieces, as there are members in the class. (Master provided).

- Help the participants understand that feeling comfortable doing this kind of activity takes practice, and gets easier the more often one does it. Tell them that this is the case for doing other kinds of caring acts for people. Initially, it may not feel natural, and the tendency may be to avoid the situation. But our own and others' lives can be improved by knowing that someone cares.
- Ask the participants to open their workbooks to the *Feeling Another's Feelings* page. Read the information introducing the lesson and discuss the importance of empathy. Using the overhead transparency **Empathy** discuss aspects of empathy as they are presented in the definition.
- Assign the workbook lesson and ask them to apply the concepts that are presented to relationships they are currently in.

---

## LECTURE NOTES:

The ability to set aside one's own feelings and desires for awhile in order to fully attend to the needs of another person is a sign of maturity. Relationships that develop when two mature people are together will demonstrate a greater degree of caring between them. Caring can be shown to another person in many ways. It can involve overt demonstrations of kindness, understanding the other person's point of view, meeting a particular need they may have, or simply being supportive of something they really want to do. Couples who are willing to understand and meet each other's needs are showing *empathy* for one another.

People can cultivate empathy by developing a caring attitude. A positive way to demonstrate genuine caring for another person is to cultivate the skill of listening. When partners actively listen to each other, it shows that their thoughts and feelings are mutually important. The partner feels valued as a person and can begin to develop trust in the relationship. When both partners listen to each other's perspectives, they reduce the likelihood for disagreements and show a greater willingness to learn from one another.

Making another person a priority in one's life will keep a relationship growing. Showing someone that they are a priority takes practice. It is not enough to *think* about caring behaviors, it is important to *do* them. It is too easy to assume that a person just "knows" what another person feels for him/her. They may not know at all. Caring acts go a long way in demonstrating with or without words what one feels for the other person.

## FEELING ANOTHER'S FEELINGS

One of the most important aspects of a healthy relationship is the ability for individuals to be sensitive to and understanding of each other's feelings, situation, and motives. This is called *empathy*. The quality of a relationship is greatly increased when couples are empathetic toward one another.



### A. Pay Attention

Becoming a good listener is a skill that can be developed and improved. Active listening means being willing to set aside one's own personal agenda in order to fully attend to what is being said by someone else.

1. Why is genuine listening a sign of caring for another person?

---

---

2. How does it make you feel when another person really cares about what you are thinking or experiencing?

---

---

3. How can you demonstrate caring when your partner is:

Sad \_\_\_\_\_

Angry \_\_\_\_\_

Disappointed \_\_\_\_\_

Happy \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you like to be treated when you're having a bad day?

---

---

## B. Make the Other Person a Priority

Thinking about another person is often demonstrated by doing simple but caring things for them.

1. When was the last time you did something caring for another person just because you wanted to? What did you do?

---

---

---

2. List some additional caring acts that would show someone you really cared about him/her.

---

---

---

3. Always being too busy to spend time with someone you care about sends a negative message about their importance to you. When can you set aside time in your schedule to spend time with someone who is special to you?

---

---

---

