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Exercise 1

Observation or Evaluation?

To determine your proficiency at discerning between observations and evaluations, complete the following exercise. Circle the number in front of any statement that is an observation only, with no evaluation mixed in.

1. “When I asked Maria to please listen to me, she answered back rudely.”
2. “Toby told me that the dog ate his homework.”
3. “I heard the 6th grader say to the 3rd grader, ‘You’re stupid.’”
4. “She’s very smart.”
5. “You’re a wonderful writer.”
6. “I can’t recall a time this week when she arrived at school by the time the bell rang.”
7. “He’s a bully.”
8. “She told me that she has a learning disorder.”
9. “I saw her talking and laughing with three other girls, while pointing to the new student.”
10. “They were being very disruptive.”

Here are my responses for Exercise 1:

1. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I consider "rudely" to be an evaluation. An example of an observation without evaluation might be: When I asked Maria to please listen to me, she answered, "I don't have to listen to anybody."
2. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that an observation was expressed without being mixed together with an evaluation.
3. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that an observation was expressed without being mixed together with an evaluation.
4. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I consider "very smart" to be an evaluation. An observation without evaluation might be: "She answered every question to my satisfaction on every one of her final exams."
5. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I consider "wonderful" to be an evaluation. An observation without evaluation might be, "In your story you used at least three paragraphs to describe the lives of each character."
6. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that an observation was expressed without being mixed together with an evaluation.
7. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I consider "bully" to be an evaluation. An observation without evaluation would be, "Six students told me that he threatens them if they don't do what he says,"

or “I have seen him at recess, on several occasions, take the ball out of other students’ hands.”

8. If you circled this number, we’re in agreement that an observation was expressed without being mixed together with an evaluation. While I consider “learning disorder” an evaluation, the statement that “She told me that she has a learning disorder” is an observation of what she did.
9. If you circled this number, we’re in agreement that an observation was expressed without being mixed together with an evaluation.
10. If you circled this number, we’re not in agreement. I consider “disruptive” an evaluation. An observation without evaluation might be, “they were laughing louder than I would have liked while I was trying to give directions.”



Exercise 2

Expressing Feelings

If you would like to see whether we're in agreement about the verbal expression of feelings, circle the number in front of any of the following statements in which feelings are verbally expressed.

1. "I feel you are angry."
2. "I'm pleased to see you complete the report."
3. "I feel sad because I'd like everyone to have a sense of belonging at school, and I see that you don't."
4. "You're delightful."
5. "When you showed the new student around, I felt so happy."
6. "I'm grateful that you told me what's troubling you."
7. "I feel like you students aren't trying as hard as you could."
8. "I'm worried that you won't have time to finish that."
9. "When you don't do what I say, I feel disrespected."
10. "I feel happy to see how much you are learning."

Here are my responses for Exercise 2:

1. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I don't consider "you are angry" to be a feeling. To me, it expresses what the speaker thinks the other person is feeling, rather than how the speaker is feeling. Whenever the words "I feel" are followed by the words "I," "you," "he," "she," "they," "it," "that," "like," or "as if," what follows is generally not what I would consider to be a feeling. Examples of an expression of feeling might be: "I feel concerned . . ." or "I'm curious . . ."
2. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.
3. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.
4. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I don't consider "delightful" to be a feeling. To me, it expresses how the speaker evaluates the other person, as delightful, rather than how the speaker is feeling. An expression of feeling might be: "I feel delighted . . ." or "I feel happy when I see you . . ."
5. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.
6. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.
7. If you circled this number, we are not in agreement. To me, this sentence expresses what the speaker thinks the other person is doing. This is generally the case when the words "I feel" are followed by the word "like." An expression of feeling in this case might be: "I feel sad

and concerned when I see the work you've been turning in.”

8. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.
9. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. I don't consider "disrespected" to be a feeling. To me, it expresses what the speaker thinks the other person is doing. An expression of feeling in this case might be: "I feel disappointed . . ." or "I feel upset . . ."
10. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that a feeling was verbally expressed.



Exercise 3

Acknowledging Needs

To practice identifying needs, please circle the number in front of any statement whereby the speaker is acknowledging responsibility for his or her feelings by showing how their feelings are connected to their needs.

1. "I feel relieved that you returned when you did because I was concerned for your safety."
2. "I feel upset hearing you call her a name because I need respect for everyone."
3. "I'm excited about your report."
4. "I'm hurt when you say, 'I don't care.'"
5. "When you come late to class I feel frustrated."
6. "It makes me mad when you scribble on your paper."
7. "I'm disappointed because I wanted to get my point across clearly, and I see that I didn't."
8. "You make me so happy when you help each other."
9. "I'm puzzled when you do things like that."
10. "I'm grateful that you spoke up because I value honesty."

Here are my responses for Exercise 3:

1. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the speaker is acknowledging responsibility for his or her feelings.
2. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the speaker is acknowledging responsibility for his or her feelings.
3. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To express the needs or thoughts underlying his or her feelings, the speaker might have said, "I'm excited about your report because I've been wanting to learn more about dolphins."
4. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To me, the statement implies that the other person's behavior is solely responsible for the speaker's feelings. It doesn't reveal the speaker's needs or thoughts that are contributing to his or her feelings. To do so, the speaker might have said, "When you say 'I don't care,' I feel hurt, because my need for consideration is not met."
5. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To express the needs and thoughts underlying his or her feelings, the speaker might have said, "When you come late to class I feel frustrated because I have a need to use our time in a way that contributes to everyone's learning."
6. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To express the needs and thoughts underlying his or her feelings, the speaker might have said, "When you scribble on your paper, I feel angry because I have a need to conserve our resources"

7. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the speaker is acknowledging responsibility for his or her feelings.
8. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To express the needs and thoughts underlying his or her feelings, the speaker might have said, "I'm happy when I see you helping each other because I value cooperation and shared learning."
9. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To express the needs and thoughts underlying his or her feelings, the speaker might have said, "I'm puzzled when you do things like that. I'd like to understand what need you're trying to meet."
10. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the speaker is acknowledging responsibility for his or her feelings.



Exercise 4

Expressing Requests

To see whether we're in agreement about the clear expression of requests, circle the number in front of any of the following statements in which the speaker is clearly requesting that a specific action be taken.

1. "I want you to be respectful."
2. "I'd like you to pay attention when I'm talking."
3. "I'd like you to tell me what your understanding is of my objectives for this project."
4. "I would like you to be on time in the future."
5. "I'd like you to tell me if you'd be willing to schedule a time to talk about what happened with you and Toby today."
6. "I'd like you to try harder."
7. "I'd like you to put away all the materials you've been working with in the next five minutes."
8. "I'd like you to use your words to tell her what's going on."
9. "I'd like you to raise your hand at any point that you don't understand my directions. Is anyone unwilling to do this?"
10. "I'd like us to play fair."

Here are my responses for Exercise 4:

1. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To me, the words "be respectful" do not clearly express a specific action that is being requested. The speaker might have said, "I'd like you to answer my question or tell me what need of yours prevents you from doing so."
2. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To me, the words "pay attention" do not clearly express a specific action that is being requested. The speaker might have said, "after I finish what I'm about to say, I'd like you to tell me back what you heard me say"
3. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the statement clearly expresses what the speaker is requesting.
4. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To me, the words "be on time" do not clearly express a specific action being requested. The speaker might have said, "I would like you to tell me if you would be willing from now on to have your jackets and backpacks put away and be sitting at your desks by the time the bell rings?"
5. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the statement clearly expresses what the speaker is requesting.
6. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. To me, the words "try harder" do not clearly express a specific action being requested. The speaker might have said, "I'd like you to tell me what I could do to support you focusing on this work until it is completed."

7. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the statement clearly expresses what the speaker is requesting.
8. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. The words "use your words" do not clearly express a specific action being requested. The speaker might have said, "I'd like you to tell her what she did that you didn't like, how you feel, and what need of yours was not met."
9. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the statement clearly expresses what the speaker is requesting.
10. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. The words "play fair" do not clearly express a specific action being requested. The speaker might have said, "I'd like you to tell me if you would be willing to have each person take only one turn until everyone has had a turn."



Exercise 5

Differentiating Between Receiving Empathically And Non-Empathically

If you would like an exercise to see whether we are in agreement about empathy, please circle the number in front of the statements in which person B is responding empathically to what is going on within Person A.

1. *Person A (student):* Nobody likes me.
Person B (teacher): Yes they do. They just don't know you very well because you're shy.
2. *Person A (student):* I can't do these math problems. I'm stupid.
Person B (teacher): Do you feel frustrated and want to understand math better?
3. *Person A (parent):* My daughter won't talk to me about anything.
Person B (teacher): Have you tried listening more?
4. *Person A (school principal):* You need to bring your students' test scores up.
Person B (teacher): Are you worried and want to protect us from any unpleasant consequences that might happen if we don't show higher test scores?
5. *Person A (student):* Pat's always the teacher's pet.
Person B (teacher): Are you mad because I ask her to help me a lot?
6. *Person A (student):* I hate school.
Person B (teacher): I know just how you feel. I didn't

like school when I was your age.

7. *Person A (student)*: I think it's unfair that the other class gets a longer recess longer than we do.

Person B (teacher): That's because they're younger.

8. *Person A (parent)*: You give your students too much homework. My daughter is in tears every night trying to get it done.

Person B (teacher): Are you feeling concerned about your daughter's health and well-being?

9. *Person A (student)*: I don't want to talk about it.

Person B (teacher): I don't see how we're going to work this out if you won't talk about it.

10. *Person A (student)*: I don't want the bell to ring. I'll never get to finish my story.

Person B (teacher): Are you feeling frustrated because you really want to complete your story now that you're so close?

Here are my responses for Exercise 5:

1. I didn't circle this one because I hear Person B giving reassurance and then offering an analysis instead of empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.
Person B might have said, "Are you sad because you really want to have friends?"
2. If you circled this we are in agreement. I hear Person B empathically receiving what Person A is expressing.
3. I didn't circle this one because I hear Person B giving advice rather than empathically receiving what Person A is expressing.
Person B might have said, "Do you feel sad because you'd like to have more connection with your daughter?"
4. If you circled this we are in agreement. I hear Person B empathically receiving what Person A is expressing.
5. I hear Person B taking responsibility for Person A's feelings rather than empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.
Person B might have said, "Are you mad because you'd like more opportunities to help out?"
6. I hear Person B assuming that he/she has understood and then talking about his/her own feelings rather than empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.
Person B might have said, "Are you feeling frustrated and needing more help with this subject?"
7. I hear Person B explaining rather than empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.
Person B might have said, "Are you upset because

you'd like to see that everyone is treated fairly here at school?"

8. If you circled this we are in agreement. I hear Person B empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.
9. I hear Person B giving his/her opinions rather than empathically receiving what is going on in Person A. Person B might have said, "Are you upset and want some time to yourself to sort out your feelings?"
10. If you circled this we are in agreement. I hear Person B empathically receiving what is going on in Person A.



Exercise 6

Hearing the Need Behind “No”

In order to create mutual objectives and an atmosphere of mutual respect, rather than to impose our wishes on others, it is helpful to practice hearing the needs people are saying “Yes” to when they say “No” to our requests. Please circle the number in front of any statement in which Speaker B is able to hear the needs of Speaker A when Speaker A says “No.”

1. *Person A (student)*: “No. I’m not going to spend my free time helping her with her work.”

Person B (teacher): “We all need to help each other.”

2. *Person A (student)*: “I don’t have to salute the flag.”

Person B (teacher): “If you don’t, you’ll have to go explain yourself to the principal.”

3. *Person A (parent)*: “I won’t make my daughter do something she doesn’t believe in.”

Person B (teacher): “It sounds like you want to support your daughter in being honest and true to herself.”

4. *Person A (school principal)*: “No, you can’t eliminate letter grades in your class.”

Person B (teacher): “I can’t keep participating in a system that ranks kids and contributes to stress and ruthless competition.”

5. *Person A (student)*: “I won’t work on a group project.”

Person B (teacher): “Just give it a try.”

6. *Person A (student)*: “This assignment is so stupid. I won’t do it.”

Person B (teacher): “Do you want to make sure that the work you do has meaning for you?”

7. *Person A (student):* “I won’t say I’m sorry when I’m not.”

Person B (teacher): “I’m afraid you’ll be sorry if you don’t.”

8. *Person A (parent):* “I’m not willing to sit and listen to you tell me what’s wrong with my child.”

Person B (teacher): “It sounds like you’d like more balance in our conversation, and might like hearing some things I admire and appreciate about your child as well as what is concerning me?”

9. *Person A (student):* “You’re not going to catch me reciting poetry.”

Person B (teacher): “Do you think it’s not cool?”

10. *Person A (student):* “Coloring in maps is so boring.”

Person B (teacher): “Would you like to find a different way to learn geography?”

Here are my responses for Exercise 6:

1. I didn't circle this one because I see Person B lecturing Person A with the intention to induce guilt rather than hearing what's going on in Person A. I guess that Person A needs respect for his autonomy and support for how he chooses to spend his time.
2. I see Person B making a threat rather than hearing what's going on in Person A. My guess is that Person A needs to protect her/his autonomy.
3. If you circled this we are in agreement that Person B is attempting to hear the needs of Person A.
4. I see Person B stating his/her opinion in such a way as to imply that Person A is wrong rather than hearing Person A's needs. I guess that Person A needs accountability and efficiency.
5. I see Person B responding with a suggestion rather than hearing Person A's need. I might guess that Person A needs protection from some frustration or dissatisfaction similar to what she has experienced in a previous group project.
6. If you circled this number we are in agreement. I see Person B hearing what Person A is valuing.
7. If you circled this number we are not in agreement. I hear Person B suggesting a threat and attempting to coerce by inducing fear rather than hearing Person A's needs. I might ask, "Do you need empathy for the pain you are experiencing?"
8. If you circled this we are in agreement. I see Person B

hearing the needs of Person A.

9. I see Person B probing and asking for an opinion rather than hearing the needs of Person A. A response that would indicate that Person B is listening for Person A's needs might be, "Are you wanting to protect yourself from painful feelings, like embarrassment or fear?"
10. If you circled this we are in agreement. I see Person B attempting to hear the needs of Person A.



Exercise 7

Protective Use of Force vs. Punitive Use of Force

A key distinction between the protective use of force and the punitive use of force is that the sole intention of the person using protective force is to protect, while the intention of the person using punitive force is to punish (by threatening or carrying out physical punishment or by attempting to induce shame or guilt.) In the following situations, circle the number in front of any action taken by the teacher that is a clear example of the protective use of force.

1. At lunch recess, the teacher sees one student hit another student. The teacher is afraid someone will get hurt so she tells the student she saw hitting to go immediately to the principal's office until she can come and talk with him.
2. A teacher asks a student a question and the student does not answer. The teacher thinks, "How rude! I'll show you!" and tells the student he has to stay after class.
3. A parent has come to the classroom to show slides of their family's trip to Brazil. During the slide show, one student makes loud noises that attract others' attention even after the teacher has asked him to stop several times. The teacher, feeling frustrated and wanting the rest of the class to be able to pay attention to the slideshow, tells the student to go sit in the hallway until the slideshow is over.

4. When a teacher notices that a group of students are poking each other with sticks, she tells them, “Stop right now before someone gets hurt. I want you to come sit down until you come up with a safe way to play together!”
5. A teacher says to a student, “All week I’ve been telling you to stop throwing the ball at other students, but I still see you doing it. You will spend the next two breaks in the classroom cleaning the chalkboard.”
6. A teacher leaves the classroom for five minutes and returns to find the students running around instead of reading at their desks as she asked them to do. She says, “You don’t seem to know how to stay in your desks so you will practice by staying at your desks for the first ten minutes of lunch recess.”
7. A teacher says to the class that she’s very disappointed in the number of low scores on the recent standardized test. She then returns the tests, announcing each student’s score as she hands them their test. When she returns the tests with the lowest scores, she shakes her head disapprovingly.
8. A student is running very fast down the hall and bumps into a teacher along the way. The teacher stops him and asks him to sit down. She then explains the reason for the rule against running inside the school building, citing the injuries that had been caused by someone running in the hall.

Here are my responses for Exercise 7:

1. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the teacher in this situation is most likely using her power to protect, not to punish—assuming that she trusts that the principal will not punish the child.
2. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. The thoughts of the teacher reveal the kind of judgment that usually is associated with an intent to punish.
3. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement that this is a clear example of protective use of force. It is not clear to me what the intention of the teacher is given the information provided.
4. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that this is an example of the protective use of force.
5. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. It is not clear to me what the intention of the teacher is given the information provided. I would assume that the intent was to punish.
6. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement. As in the previous situation, the teacher's intentions are not clear. I would assume that the intent was to punish.
7. If you circled this number, we're not in agreement that this is an example of the protective use of force. By publicly announcing the test scores and continuing to express her disappointment with the students who had low scores, I would interpret that she is attempting to punish these students by inducing guilt.

8. If you circled this number, we're in agreement that the teacher's thinking is in harmony with the protective use of force.