

Week 3 Class Concepts: Self-Concept and Self-Disclosure

Self-concept – how we define ourselves; shaped by our attitudes, beliefs and values

Self-esteem – evaluation of our self-concept; self-worth

Self-concept and self-esteem developed through:

- Interaction with others
- Personal reflection/self-reflexivity
- Social comparisons
- Media influences

How does our self-esteem influence our relationships with others?

How to improve one's self-esteem?

- Self-talk
- Recognition of strengths
- Visualization
- Reframing

What is **self-disclosure**?

Revealing information about yourself that you know but others do not.

Why is self-disclosure beneficial for relationships?

- 1) Helps clarify messages
- 2) Helps us get to know each other better/Increases our social network
- 3) Increases self-knowledge

Why NOT self-disclose?

- 1) Personal risk or social rejection
- 2) Interpersonal challenges/difficulties (e.g. “can’t take it back”; negative consequences; can hurt the other person)
- 3) Physical/Material loss
- 4) Loss of privacy; blurring or changing of privacy boundaries

Models for understanding self-disclosure in our relationships:

- Social Penetration Model (the “onion”)
- Johari Window

Some Guidelines for Disclosing

- Always question your motives.
- Consider the appropriateness
- Weigh the consequences
- Consider the other person

Remember, we cannot separate who we are from what we communicate. Since self-disclosure is powerful, we must engage it in a mindful way.