

Priming Strategies – Social Communication – Complex Skills

Agreeing to disagree

Sometimes I disagree with something that is said. I may feel strongly that that person is wrong. When I disagree with something, I may become (angry, upset, etc. – use student's choice of descriptor).

When I feel this way, I can: _____

(Hints: take a deep breath, practice a self-calming sequence, identify the disagreement out loud by calming saying, "I do not agree with you. I feel _____," state my opinion once, etc.)

If the other person continues to disagree with me, I can: _____

(Hints: suggest we talk about something else, say "I guess we disagree. I do not want to argue so let's just agree to disagree on that," etc.)

Managing workload as a team

I like to work alone. Sometimes I have to do a (job, task, assignment, etc.) with a partner. This can confuse me and I may get frustrated. (Instructor: Define what is frustrating here for the student...)

To get the assignment done without frustration, I can: _____

(Hints: Set up a written plan with my partner for who will do the steps of the task [may even color-code the list of steps so that student can see clearly what each will do], ask my teacher for a written list of my responsibilities, etc.)

Working on a project with a group can be difficult (Instructor: use student's words here!).

(Define the problem: Sometimes a member of the group does not do their part. Sometimes a group member is difficult to deal with, makes jokes, clowns around, avoids the work, etc.)

I get frustrated when: _____

When I get frustrated, I can: _____

Hints: Follow my set of directions, do my jobs well, identify deadlines with group as to when each step is completed, ask for teacher assistance only when deadlines are not reached, etc.)

Asking and divulging personal information

Instructor:

Define 'personal information' in concrete terms that fit the student's thinking. Write this at the top of a page.

Then create a list showing specific examples or categories of 'personal information' and place these in a circle graph or graphic organizer that shows with whom you can share personal information. For instance, define 'what you share with doctor/parents/grandparents vs. brothers/sisters vs. what you share with teacher/ principal vs. what you share with specific (identified) 'close friends' vs. what you share with friends/acquaintances vs. strangers.

Consider creating a list or organizer to show what you share with male friends vs. female friends.

Consider creating a list of "Off Limit Topics" if necessary. Define if and when the student can discuss these 'topics.'

I like to (talk on Facebook, email my friends, text my friends, etc.). There are things that I can talk about (when I text, when I email friends, etc.) that I do not want to say to (my teachers, my supervisor, my co-workers on the job, people who may give me a job, etc.).

Instructor:

Create a graphic organizer or list that defines specifically topics of conversation with 'close friends' (clearly listed) vs. 'professional contacts' (employers, co-workers, faculty, etc.- list these clearly at top of list).

Create a graphic organizer or list that shows HOW one writes to 'friends' vs. 'professional contacts.' (Use of greetings, spelling conventions, abbreviations, etc.)

Interpreting idioms & sarcasm

*It can be confusing when someone uses words in a way that I do not understand.
If someone uses an expression that I do not understand, I can: _____*

(Hints: Ask what that means, ask if that is an idiom and initiate a short conversation about the idiom, tell the person that "I do not understand. Can you say that a different way?")

I listen to words and try to understand what is said.

Sometimes people change their tone of voice, their expression or their gestures and say something that is the opposite of what they mean. This is sarcasm.

Deciphering interest

*Just because I am interested in a topic does not mean that others are interested.
When someone is listening, they may: _____*

Instructor:

Help the student to create a list of behaviors that mean "I am listening!" (Hints: Nodding head, shaking head, intense face, smile, looking at me while I talk, making a comment, making affirmative sound, asking question, etc.)

Create a list of behaviors that mean "I am tired of this!" (Hints: Blank face, blank stare, no words, no nodding, looking away, shifting back and forth, looking at watch, etc.)

Put these into a graphic organizer and practice role-playing with this set of behaviors.

Managing interpersonal relationships with co-workers

I want to have fun with friends on the internet. However, some people will act like friends and try to do something harmful. To be safe I will: _____

Instructor:

Set up individualized rules that can be posted beside the computer station or on the tablet or laptop for the student. These might include or be related to the following:

- 1) Only deal with 'friends' (defined below).*
- 2) Keep 'critical information' - address, family names, social security number, driver's license and all banking information to yourself.*
- 3) Keep your anti-spyware and anti-virus programs running at all times. (If you get a virus or spyware message, get offline and fix it immediately (call _____).*
- 4) Use only a browser that will not leak information. Specify which browsers here: _____*
- 5) When someone asks for critical information, get off the internet and talk to _____*

When I want to be someone's friend on Facebook, there are certain rules I should try to follow:

Instructor:

Arrange a list of rules related to the following issues, based on the student's needs:

- 1) People who are off-limits as Facebook friends (teachers, supervisors, etc.)*
- 2) People who might be appropriate Facebook "friends."*
- 3) The frequency of requesting (one request, then stop).*
- 4) The frequency of wall posts.*

Some people (on Facebook, other social network) will be offended by certain topics and by the use of certain words. I can keep my friends by: _____

(Instructor: Set up a list of rules specifically designed to address the student's needs.)

Managing interpersonal relationships with co-workers

Instructor:

Create a precise definition of 'friend' that the student can use and with which he agrees.
 For instance,

A friend is someone who I can enjoy being with. Friends have shared interests in the same events or activities. Friends do shared activities together and talk about them.

My interests are: _____

Instructor: Create a graphic organizer –

People	Interests We Share

Then use the organizer to determine 'friendship.'

Who of the above list do I consider my friends?

Co-workers are people that I work beside and do my job with.

During break time or lunch, we may talk.

During break we may talk about things we like. I can ask: _____

(Hints: "What do you like to do away from work?"; "What did you do this weekend?" etc.)

If we find that we have shared interests, we may decide to spend time _____ outside of work.

Instructor: Consider creating a list of questions or statements that will support the student I finding shared activities.

At work, someone may ask me to go to an event or to attend a party.

When this happens, I may feel: _____

(Instructor: Make this the student's words, given some examples of what someone might ask.)

When someone asks me to go to an event, I can: _____

Instructor: *If the student experiences anxiety or confusion when asked, do you present a coping strategy, a polite delay strategy, a 'check my calendar' strategy, etc.? If the student does not want to go to the event, do you present a safe and polite way of declining that the student can agree to use?*

Managing romantic interests in the workplace

Instructor:

Consider creating a graphic organizer that defines what to say vs. what not to say with people of the opposite sex.

Consider creating a list of topics of conversation for a student who is anxious when interacting with the opposite sex or with a specific person.

Consider creating a list of 'conversation starters' or questions to ask to support interaction with a member of the opposite sex.

Once I find that I have shared interests with someone, I may decide that I want to go out with that person. I need to determine if he / she might feel the same way about me.

Instructor: *Consider developing a script that can be practiced to build confidence and comfort with the process of asking someone out.*

Instructor:

Consider the development of a graphic organizer entitled “Is this person interested in a date?”

Help the student to identify the verbal and non-verbal signs of interest (this is so tricky!):

Maybe Interested	Probably Not interested
<i>Starts conversations with me</i>	<i>Is dating someone else</i>
<i>Sits nears me (by choice) during lunch</i>	<i>Doesn’t start conversations with me</i>

Once I have decided that it is a good idea to ask a person out, I do not need to ask him/ her while we are working. I can ask him/her out at break or after work. I can also ask for his/her number so that I can call.

It is really frustrating if I ask someone to go out and they say no. It is also really frustrating when I am excluded from a social activity (a party, an after-school event).

Instructor:

Consider a social narrative or script to practice what to say when rejected.

Consider a list of extracurricular activities (e.g. club memberships, volunteer positions, social networking sites, online gaming groups, social skills groups) that might provide opportunities to meet new people).

Consider a list of self-regulating strategies (To-do list) when frustrated or rejected, answering the question – “What will make me feel better?”