

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 17

(Interpersonal Effectiveness Worksheet 12)

Validation

VALIDATION MEANS:

- Finding the kernel of truth in another person's perspective or situation; verifying the facts of a situation.
- Acknowledging that a person's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors have causes and are therefore understandable.
- *Not* necessarily agreeing with the other person.
- *Not* validating what is actually invalid.

WHY VALIDATE?

- It improves our relationships by showing we are listening and understand.
- It improves interpersonal effectiveness by reducing:
 1. Pressure to prove who is right
 2. Negative reactivity
 3. Anger
- It makes problem solving, closeness, and support possible.
- Invalidation hurts.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO VALIDATE

- The valid (and *only* the valid).
- The facts of a situation.
- A person's experiences, feelings/emotions, beliefs, opinions, or thoughts about something.
- Suffering and difficulties.

REMEMBER:

- Every invalid response makes sense in some way.
- Validation is not necessarily agreeing.
- Validation doesn't mean you like it.
- Only validate the valid!

Note. Adapted from Linehan, M. M. (1997). Validation and psychotherapy. In A. Bohart & L. Greenberg (Eds.), *Empathy reconsidered: New directions in psychotherapy* (pp. 353–392). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Copyright 1997 by the American Psychological Association. Adapted by permission.

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