

# youthESource Retreat

## Heart to Heart

by Herman Glaess

### Objectives

That participants will:

- Explore the effects of "put-downs" on self-esteem.
- Experience the effects of compliments and positive bombardment
- Explore some reasons for putting down others.
- Learn how to let the Gospel lead us to respond positively to someone who has hurt us.

### Materials Needed

- 8.5" x 11" paper
- Markers
- Small pieces of paper or adhesive computer labels (1" x 3.5")
- Copy of "Commendable Behaviors" for each participant

### Introduction

*To Leader: The following should be shared with youth during the retreat, as well as serve as an introduction for the adult leader in preparation for the vent.*

Who am I? How do I fit? What do I want in life? Whom do I need? Who needs me?

No one ever answers these questions to complete satisfaction, but "The Self" continues to ask.

Each person has specific strong needs during the day-to-day existence. We have a need to be needed and specific needs to be met. Each of us demands "Three Big A's" and also desires to give these same "Three Big A's" to others.

Christians will better understand the "Three Big A's" because our Lord has provided loving and living examples of how to share them with others.

### Three Big A's

#### *Attention*

Persons of all ages constantly strive for attention. The striving takes on different forms. Personality differences along with such things as dress, speech, activities and vocations are part of this search for attention. Crying, temper tantrums, smiling and laughing help assist a person receive needed attention. Some individuals seem to want more than others and the endeavors of some persons searching for this necessary attention might be difficult to accept.

#### *Acceptance*

Along with attention, each person wants and needs to feel accepted by others who are special to them. There is a lasting desire and search for a rich type of acceptance similar to that which God has shown us in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Most persons want to improve themselves so that they will be accepted by significant others—but even as they strive to improve, people search for the type of acceptance that says, "I like you just the way you are."

#### *Appreciation*

This feeling includes attention and acceptance, but is generally deeper, richer and more satisfying. It is a feeling that indicates that not only do you accept me as a person, but you deeply appreciate me because your life is better since I am a part of it. We desire to feel this appreciation especially from persons with whom we have meaningful relationships.

All of us can identify specific experiences where we have received positive attention, genuine acceptance and sincere appreciation. When someone shows us such memorable attention, acceptance or appreciation we grow in our personhood and the person and event connected with our growth becomes significant and memorable.

### **Bible Study**

This Bible study is developed for groups of 4-6 persons.

In your group, ask each person to respond to the following sentences:

- I remember a time recently when I "put-down" someone. I felt...
- The most recent compliment I received was... and it made me feel...

Read John 6:1-14.

Close your eyes and imagine yourself as a small child. You hear the disciples talking about all the people who have gathered to hear Jesus. There are so many people in this area. You hear them comment that it is dinner time and it doesn't appear that most of these people have brought food. Philip wonders where they will find enough food to feed the people. It is quite a distance for them to return home without eating a meal first. Your mother has packed you a good lunch and you would be willing to share it. You decide to go to one of Jesus' disciples and offer to share your basket of food. You're excited and tug on Andrew's arm and show him your basket. You explain to him that you have five small barley loaves and two small fish.

What is Andrew's reply to you (see verse 9)? How are you feeling?

So you return to your area. You can see Andrew talking to Philip. Then you see Andrew and Philip walk over to Jesus and you can see them talking and looking your direction. They must be discussing your offer. What do you think they are saying? How are you feeling?

Then you see a smile of Jesus' face. Andrew and Philip are looking puzzled and you wonder what's going to happen. Soon Andrew returns to where you are sitting.

Surprise! He asks if he can take your basket of food to Jesus. Imagine your feelings now!

So Jesus performs a miracle. There is more food than you have ever seen in one place. How do you feel now? Imagine what is being said to you by the people around you. Imagine what Andrew might be saying now.

Open your eyes and share with those in your group the words of affirmation being shared with you as the small child.

Share with your group the feelings you imagined as the young child was being "put down" by Andrew. What are some of the reasons that we put down people?

Think of the miracles that could happen today with each person sharing a compliment with those around each of us. Jesus shared affirmations with those around Him and continues to share affirmations with each of us. Each of us is a special child and He assures us of that in our baptism.

Kenneth Erickson in his book, *The Power of Praise* (Concordia Publishing House, 1984), describes what would happen if you or I affirmed two other individuals in one day. If each one of the three was motivated to continue that process of affirmation, by the 21st day more than 2,000,000 people would be affirmed. That same process happens when we "put down" people. "Regardless of whether we praise or belittle, we can't envision where our impact on the lives of others may end."

**Action Time:** Write the names of three significant people who on some specific occasion helped you feel one or more of the Three Big A's.

What memorable/significant events were associated with these feelings of attention, acceptance or appreciation? Jot down a few of the incidents when you experienced the Three Big A's.

**Procedure:**

1. Form equal groups of four, five or six persons. (Logistically you may have some groups with one more person than in other groups.)
2. Each group should appoint a "timer" to help it move along at about the same pace.
3. To assist in name recognition and also for future use, 8 1/2" X 11" paper should be folded so it will stand as a tent. Participants should use felt-tipped magic markers to print their names.
4. Each person in the group will share the significant person and events written earlier with the other group members for a period of three minutes. Other group members will listen intently for interests, feelings and concerns. No comments should be made or questions asked by the listeners during these three minutes. Everyone "focuses" on the speaker. Notes may be taken.
5. After all members of a group have "shared" for their three minutes, some time could be given for asking questions of individual group members. All groups should be finished before moving on.
6. All group members should be given adhesive computer labels or pieces of paper of similar size (1" X 3.5") so that they can write notes (affirmation messages) to each of the other group members. If the groups are composed of five persons, each person should have four small pieces of paper on which to write positive comments.
7. On the basis of what has been heard in the three minutes of sharing and recalling other knowledge and experiences, each group member will write a positive "I like (admire, respect, love) you because" note to each other small group member.
8. After about five minutes, or when all notes have been written, one group member at a time, beginning with the person who first started sharing, passes his/her name tent to the person on the left (clockwise). This person mentions the person's name that is on the name tent, looks at him or her directly and says, "I like (admire, respect, love) you because..." After telling the person why you appreciate him or her, the address label or small piece of paper should be affixed to the name tent. The name tent is then passed on to the left and the procedure is repeated.
9. When the name tent is returned to the owner, it will have numerous "affirming messages" affixed and the owner may react in any manner deemed appropriate, such as "thanks," "wow," "say it again."
10. The facilitator should provide time for small groups-to share feelings and reactions at this time. The facilitator could pose such questions as: How does a sincere compliment make you feel? What does it do to your self-image? Is it easier to give or to receive a compliment? What do you say when people give you words of praise? How do you think the complimenter feels when you disagree or negate the compliment with such words as "It was nothing" or "this old rag?"

**Further discussion questions:**

11. If praise helps build positive self-esteem, what does a "put-down" or critical remark do to a person's self-esteem?
12. Research shows that people tend to be critical about twice as often as they compliment another person. Why? How do you feel when you pay somebody a compliment? How do you feel when somebody gives you a sincere compliment?

13. If one never receives compliments do you think that he or she has enough human relations capital to pay a compliment to someone else?

**Prepare the following list as a hand-out.**

"Commendable Behaviors."

14. Read the 20 adjectives below that describe behaviors that a group of college students described as "commendable" and the type of behavior which they sought in their friends:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciative | <input type="checkbox"/> Good-natured  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerful     | <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident    | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Considerate  | <input type="checkbox"/> Open(Sharing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable   | <input type="checkbox"/> Optimistic    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiving    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasant      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly     | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gentle       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere       |

Place a + by the six attributes which you feel are your strengths. Place a - by four attributes which you desire to improve.

With a partner, take some time to share the pluses and minuses and share goals for improvement in "commendable behavior."

**THE MYSTERY OF THE DIPPER AND THE BUCKET**

Read and discuss the following.

A P.E.P. IS A BUCKET-FILLER AND A  
P.U.D. IS A DIPPER IN THE DRAMA OF THE  
DIPPER AND THE BUCKET

You have heard of the cup that overflowed. This is the story of a bucket that is like the cup, only larger; it is an invisible bucket. Everyone always has one. It determines how we feel about ourselves, about others and how we get along with people. Have you ever experienced a series of very favorable things which made you want to be good to people for a week? At that time, your bucket was full.

A bucket can be filled by a lot of things that happen. When a person speaks to you, recognizing you as a human being your bucket is filled a little...even more if he calls you by name, especially if it is the name you like to be called. If he compliments you on your dress or on a job well done, the level in your bucket goes up still higher. There must be a million ways to raise the level in another's bucket: writing a friendly letter, remembering something that is special to him, knowing the names of his children, expressing sympathy for his loss, giving him a hand when his work is heavy, taking time for conversation, or, perhaps more important, listening to him.

When one's bucket is full of this emotional support, one can express warmth and friendliness to people. But, remember, this is a theory about a bucket and a dipper. Other people have dippers and they can get their dippers in your bucket. This, too, can be done in a million ways.

Let's say I am at dinner and inadvertently upset a glass of thick, sticky chocolate milk that spills over the tablecloth, on a lady's skirt, down onto the carpet. I am embarrassed. "Bright Eyes" across the table says, "You upset that glass of chocolate milk." I made a mistake, I know I did, and then he told me about it! He got his dipper in my bucket! Think of the times a person makes a mistake, feels terrible about it, only to have someone tell him about the known mistake. ("Red pencil" mentality!)

Buckets are filled and buckets are emptied - emptied many times because people don't really think about what they are doing. When a person's bucket is emptied, he is very different than when it is full. You say to a person whose bucket is empty, "That is a pretty tie you have," and he may reply in a very irritated, defensive manner.

Although there is a limit to such an analogy, there are people who seem to have holes in their buckets. When a person has a hole in his bucket, he irritates lots of people by trying to get his dipper in their buckets. This is when he really needs somebody to put it in his bucket because he keeps losing.

The story of our lives is the interplay of the bucket and the dipper. Everyone has both. The unyielding secret of the bucket and the dipper is that when you fill another's bucket it does not take anything out of your own bucket. The level in our own bucket gets higher when we fill another's, and on the other hand, when we dip into another's bucket we do not fill our own...we lose a little.

For a variety of reasons, people hesitate filling the bucket of another and consequently do not experience the fun, joy, happiness, fulfillment and satisfaction connected with making another person happy. Some reasons for this hesitancy are that people think it sounds "fake," or the other person will be suspicious of the motive, or it is "brown-nosing."

*Taken from Potentiality Enhancement Programs, Herman L. Glaess. Used by permission.*

### **Action Experience: Planning for the Future by Helping Another**

God has placed many people in our lives who have invested in us and shown attention, acceptance and appreciation. Because much has been given to you by God through other humans, you also desire to serve God by investing yourself while assisting others. ·

Write the names of two people outside your family in whom you have invested. How did you feel about the investment of self? Who do you know that could use your help now?

Set a goal to help two people within the next two days and ask permission of a peer to call him or her after your goal has been reached.

Whom will you help?

To whom will you report?

### **Conclusion:**

In a meditative atmosphere, sitting or walking in silence, review some of the significant people and events that God has allowed you to experience. Give thought to your blessings and then focus on some of the strengths that you have according to what others have written and said as well as those you ascribed to yourself.

In a small group, hand-holding circle, or voluntary group share a prayer of thanksgiving and a petition for assistance in spiritual growth and a resultant sanctified life.

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