

Conscious Communication®

Lab Notes

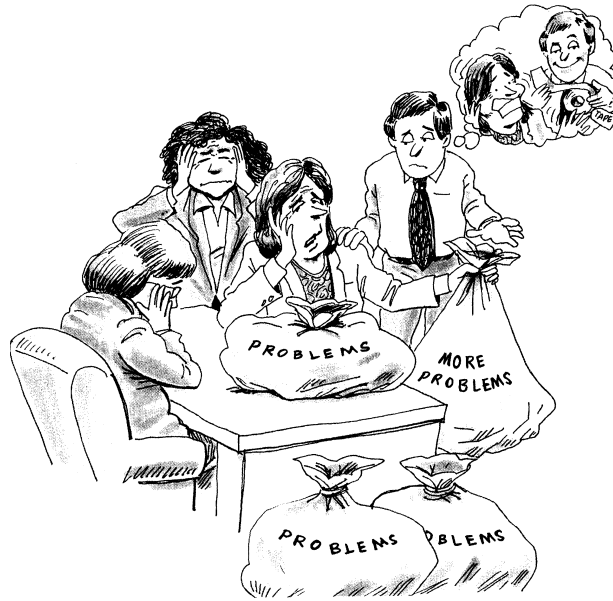
Lesson 10: Whiners

WIDE RULED



CONSCIOUS COMMUNICATION®

NOTES CLASS 10



WHINERS



CLASS 10

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- √ To understand and utilize the strategy for success when people are Whining.

NOTES

“Whining Behavior”

- Whining and Negativity are first cousins of each other.
- Whining is helpless, while Negativity is hopeless.
- Both have a tendency to spread to other people and before you know it everyone is doing it.
- The strategy for Whining also applies to Negativity.

STRATEGY FOR WHINING (and initially NEGATIVITY)

GOAL: Get them to problem solve.

Since the root cause of whining is helplessness, you want them to focus on solutions.

ACTION STEPS

1. Listen for one cycle.
 - a. People tend to whine or be negative in endless loop tapes. Give them one complete cycle and then interrupt by saying, "Excuse me for interrupting, I just want make sure I understand."

2. Backtrack summary.
 - a. Give them a complete backtrack summary of everything you have heard so far.

3. Clarify.
 - a. It will require patience and persistence because people whine or are negative in big generalizations. You must expect that though you ask for specifics of a problem they will not give you specifics. Instead they will just substitute another generalization. Expect to ask 5 to 7 questions and go nowhere. You must be ready for this because the normal human response to generalization swapping is to offer a solution. Do not do that. Your goal is to outlast them even if that requires recycling questions you already asked.

 - b. The generalization principle. When people stop at two or three red lights in a row they say, "All the lights are red today." If someone runs into two to three people in a bad mood they say, "Everyone is in a bad

mood today." Whining and negativity work the same way. Someone has two or three valid problem experiences and she says, "Everybody, everything, all the time." So assume that there are two to three valid problems and keep digging to find them.

4. Ask for solutions. Once you are looking at the specifics of a real problem ask the Whiner what they want or what they think should be done. Many people will come up with something valid and realistic.
 - a. Other people may want something that may be valid but is unrealistic. "I'm doing the work of three people. I want two more people." If you know that is not going to happen then you might empathize and then say, "I can understand how you would want that and we both know Ebenezer will never go for that, so what do you want?" Then keep asking for a solution until what they want becomes realistic.
 - b. Other people may be venting, they tell you, "I just need to get it out of my system." In this case you would acknowledge that they are venting and establish a time limit like, "Oh you are venting. Ok I have five minutes, go ahead."
 - c. The difference between venting and wallowing is that venting is intentionally done to feel better, venting has permission of the ventee, and venting has an endpoint. Wallowing goes on and on unconsciously with no permission or end point.

- d. Other people at this point will say, "I don't know." "I don't know" is also the Nothing person's first response on a talkative day. There are two ways to handle "I don't know".
 - . Say, "Guess. Make something up. If you did know, what would it be?" Then give them the expectant look.
 - . You can say any one of those statements (guess, make something up or if you did know what would it be) or all three. Nine out of ten people will respond to it by saying something that makes complete sense.
 - . For the one in ten that does not respond to your question, the next step is to exaggerate, i.e., Question: "How much will this cost?" Answer: "I don't know." Response to that: "\$50, \$5000?" Answer: "No, probably about \$500."
5. Involve the Whiner in the solution.
- a. The root of whining is helplessness, therefore you want to assign or suggest (depending on your relationship) ways to problem solve. You can handle 90% of whining with steps 1 through 5.
6. Draw a line.
- a. Some people are committed to being miserable and resist you every step of the way in 1 through 5. With these people you will finally draw a line by saying, "If you don't want to think solutions, that's fine. When



you change your mind (assumption) just let me know." Then turn away from them and be clear the interaction is now over. If you have any authority over them in the relationship you will also promise them negative consequences that you will inflict upon them, should they go out and demoralize other people. If you do not have that kind of relationship then the way you draw the line is by saying, "I am not going to talk about problems if we are not also going to talk about solutions."

- b. Because misery loves company most Whiners will come around.



LAB ASSIGNMENTS & HOMEWORK

- 1) If a friend or family member starts whining, practice playfully whining with them. Say empathetic things like, “you poor thing...” or “that’s terri
- 2) Catch yourself in the act of whining and run yourself mentally through the strategy of getting specific, asking what you want, moving forward on a solution.

COMMITMENTS TO ACTION BASED ON THIS CHAPTER