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# GOING OUT

## Lesson 6

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### Workbook Assignment

*What Should I Say?*

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### Overview

This lesson will introduce the concept of self-disclosure within relationship. The participants will learn about four areas of awareness and how they affect the quality of the bond that develops between people.

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### Objectives

- ◆ Participants will learn how four areas of self-disclosure affect relationship.
  - ◆ Participants will evaluate their own comfort levels for self-disclosure.
  - ◆ Participants will identify components of communication within the four areas.
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### Vocabulary

self-disclosure                      openness

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### Key Concepts

- Trust is the basis of self-disclosure.
  - Individuals must be willing and able to self-disclose at the same level in order for the relationship to progress forward.
  - Feeling comfortable with ones self is an important aspect of sharing with others.
  - People self-disclose more easily in an emotionally safe environment.
  - Genuine self-disclosure takes practice.
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### Preparation for Lesson

#### **Instructor will need:**

- Worksheet *What Should I Say?*
  - 3x5 cards to distribute
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### Teaching the Lesson

Distribute a 3x5 card to each of the participants and ask them to write their name on it. Then ask them to write down three things about themselves that no one else in the room is likely to know

about them. They should be instructed to choose information they are comfortable sharing because the cards will be read aloud to the group. Examples of personal information can include: shoe size, favorite movie, a childhood experience, etc.

- Collect the cards and shuffle them so they are distributed randomly before reading them.
- Select a card from the stack. Read it aloud but do not state the name of the participant on the card. After reading the items listed, ask the participants to try and identify the person in the room who wrote the card. Points or incentives can be given to participants who guess correctly.
- Read as many cards as the time allows before moving to the workbook lesson.

**Questions:**

1. How easy was it for you to think of things to share with the group?
2. How comfortable are you with letting others know things about you that they didn't know before?
3. Are you equally interested in getting to know more about someone else? Why might this help a relationship grow?

- Now ask the participants to turn to the workbook page entitled “*What Should I Say?*” Tell them they will be learning about something called the Johari Window. This exercise will introduce them to four areas of self-disclosure that affect closeness in a relationship. Each area is illustrated and explained on the first page of the lesson. Go over the information with the group and answer questions if they arise.

- Divide the participants into smaller working groups and ask them to decide together what kinds of personal information might be found in each of the quadrants. They can make a separate list as a group or they can write the information directly into the workbook. Allow about 15 minutes for this discussion and activity.

- Ask them to return to their individual seats to complete the rest of the assignment. They should evaluate honestly their own ability to self-disclose at the various levels in order to determine their readiness for close relationships with others. Instruct them to put in the lines of the quadrants for the Johari Window *as they see themselves*. **Ending discussion:** Which areas are larger or smaller than the model? How might this distribution of willingness to self-

disclose affect the quality of a relationship especially when two people don't match?

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## **LECTURE NOTES:**

Developing an emotional bond with another person requires trust that develops over time. Trust between friends or dating partners is the basis for self-disclosure, the process of allowing others to see more of one's inner person. But self-disclosure always involves the element of risk. One or both partners may be disappointed or lose interest if they do not like aspects of each other that are being revealed. Or, the partners may discover that they are not able to self-disclose at the same level. One partner may feel left out or vulnerable when the other partner is unwilling to self-disclose in the same way. When this happens, barriers begin to develop between partners. The inability of individuals to self-disclose at the same level may be an indication of deeper problems within the relationship.

The Johari Window was developed by Joseph Luft to illustrate awareness in human relationships. The lesson in the workbook was adapted from *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics Third Edition*. The model is based on a concept of four quadrants that represent different aspects of self-disclosure in interpersonal relationships. Although it is a simplified visual for describing actual communication between people, it does offer an idea of how people in relationship share information.

Quadrant I – OPEN, is the area of free activity known to others and self. This is usually general information that is easily accessible to everyone. For instance: one's name, age, school, family, etc. This information is comfortable to talk about and opens the door for relationship to begin.

Quadrant II – BLIND, is an area where others see things but the individual is less aware of them. Things people are blind to may include: personal habits, personality characteristics, or motivations. Individuals may not be able to discuss these issues because they are not sensitive to them.

Quadrant III – HIDDEN, are things that are known by the individual, but are actively kept away from others. These things might include: past experiences, deeper feelings, future goals, etc. In the beginning, people are often less willing to share personally at this level because it does involve more emotional risk.

Quadrant IV- MYSTERY, are areas of self that neither the individual nor others are aware of. These areas might include: early childhood or family patterns that have been part of the person for a long time. It may also include behaviors or thought processes that are not obvious initially such as prejudice, or cultural factors, but do have an influence on the relationship.

Communication is the key to all levels of relationship. How well one is able to share thoughts and feelings at a meaningful level, does influence the quality of the relationship.

The size of the quadrants will be different for different people. For some, the OPEN quadrant is where they like to communicate best. It is non-threatening; the information is at a surface level and does not involve much personal investment. As the relationship develops, more and more general knowledge about the individuals is revealed. But there will be problems if the communication stays at that level long term.

As Quadrant I gets larger, Quadrant III gets smaller. As more and more knowledge is gained between people the hidden areas reduce. The important element in communication, however, is helping people self-disclose in relatively similar ways.

The two areas of communication that require more work and maturity to understand are Quadrants II and IV. It takes effort to hide, deny or be blind to behaviors that interfere with the interactive process. Relationships that develop a strong trust between the people can begin exploring the deeper issues. When individuals feel emotionally safe with the other person, they are more willing to hear about and work on the weaker areas. It is important to note that change in one quadrant will affect all of the others. As individuals practice these awareness and communication skills, they will improve the likelihood that the relationships they choose will be successful.

# WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

Building a relationship with another person requires both individuals to self-disclose. This can be difficult initially because there is always a threat that the other person may not like what is revealed and then reject us. For every person there is a *Personal* side and a *Private* side. Being willing to show others who you really are takes courage and practice.

The Johari Window is sometimes used to illustrate how individuals interact with one another. Notice that there are four areas that make up the diagram.

	<b>Known to Self</b>	<b>Not Known to Self</b>
<b>Known to Others</b>	<b>Area of Free Activity</b>  <b>OPEN</b>	<b>What Others See</b>  <b>BLIND</b>
<b>Not Known to Others</b>	<b>Private or Personal</b>  <b>HIDDEN</b>	<b>Area of Unknown Activity</b>  <b>MYSTERY</b>

## Quadrant I – OPEN

The area of free activity known to self and known to others.

## Quadrant II – BLIND

The area where others can see things in ourselves of which we are unaware.

## Quadrant III – HIDDEN

The area represents things that we know about ourselves but do not reveal to others.

## Quadrant IV – MYSTERY

The area where neither self nor others are aware of certain motives and behaviors. Eventually some of these things become known and show how they were influencing relationships all along.

From *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1984 Mayfield Publication. Reprinted by permission of Joseph Luft.

**Exercise:** Working together as a group, list categories of information that might be found in each of the quadrant areas.

<b>Open</b>	<b>Blind</b>
<b>Hidden</b>	<b>Mystery</b>

**Instructions:**

In real-life relationships, the four quadrants are not always divided equally. In order to increase the **Open** area, one must be willing to decrease the **Hidden** area. Increasing the **Open** area will create the opportunity for closer relationships with others. Using the box below, decide how you would divide the four areas to best describe your own ability to self-disclose to others.