

EVALUATION OF A COMMUNICATIONS
SKILLS PROGRAM WITH STEPFATHER-ADOLESCENT-MOTHER TRIADS

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PREFACE

Yesterday is
 Already a Dream,
And Tomorrow
 Is only a vision;

But Today,
 Well Lived,
Makes every yesterday
 A dream of
Happiness and
 Every Tomorrow
A vision
 of Hope.

From the Sanskrit

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At last it is finished....

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

The three common familial patterns in America today are (1) nuclear or intact families, (2) single-parent families, and (3) stepfamilies. The study of stepfamilies has become a major concern of researchers during the past decade (Walters & Walters, 1980). Visher & Visher (1979) described stepfamilies as culturally disadvantaged families. They reported that 80 percent of divorced persons remarry, and 60 percent of these remarriages involve an adult with physical custody of one or more children.

It is for this reason that researchers' priority of concerns within the family and stepfamily are the sending and receiving of messages, resolving discipline problems, accepting responsibility for personal behaviors, and improving parenting skills (Duberman, 1974; Dreikurs, 1964; Hersey & Blanchard, 1978; Satir, 1972). This research demonstrates a need for a parenting skills program for the stepfamily, a program which is intended to improve the child-parent, child-stepparent, and marital relationship within the family.

Historical Perspective of Stepparents

The negative stepparent concept may contribute significantly to both the spiraling divorce rate among remarried couples and the need for a stepfamily skills program for

living effectively together. Historically, authors have not presented positive concepts concerning the stepparent; and children's literature reflects a serious negative influence toward stepparent acceptance. For example, this negative influence is apparent in fairy tales such as Cinderella and Hansel and Gretel. These stories provide opportunity for the children to handle their ambivalent feelings about their parent and project the negative feelings toward an unpopular stepparent. Tales like these were a part of children's literature long before the stepfamily gained any semblance of acceptability in modern society.

Statement of the Problem

Stepfamilies are often experiencing stress resulting from inadequate communication skills, marital maladjustment, and ineffective parenting skills (Duberman, 1974; Dreikurs, 1974; Satir, 1972; Visher & Visher, 1979). One source of stress within the stepfamily is the result of the children's being emotionally torn among the biological parents, step-parents, and several sets of grandparents (Bowen, 1976; Messinger, 1976; Hetherington et al., 1980).

Since stress comes from many sources and affects each family member within the family system, a systematic stepfamily skills program is needed, a program to provide specific skills to aid in the reduction of stress, the improvement of communication, enhancement of the marital adjustment and to provide a means for more effective parenting.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a family communication program called Families Living Effectively Together (FLET). FLET is designed to reduce family stress by improving family communication and stepparenting skills.

Statement of Major Research Questions

1. Can parenting styles within a blended family be improved through the FLET program?
2. Can familial stress within blended families be reduced through the use of FLET?
3. Can the FLET program effectively improve the parent-child and stepparent-child communication systems?
4. Can FLET improve the marital adjustment of a couple who are parenting stepchildren?

The Statistical Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were examined using an alpha level of .05.

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment parenting styles as measured by the Family Game.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment stress scores as measured by the Behavior Profile Inventory.

Hypothesis Three: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment communi-

cation test scores as measured by the Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory.

Hypothesis Four: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment marital adjustment test scores as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Delimitations

1. This study evaluated blended or stepfamilies whose children included at least one adolescent.

2. This study was limited by focusing on parenting styles, marital adjustment, stress reduction, and communication skills.

3. This study was concerned with stepfamilies, and the findings cannot be generalized to all families.

4. This study evaluated only blended families in which the marital dyad consisted of the male stepparent and the natural mother of the adolescent.

5. This study examined only one adolescent from each blended family.

6. This study consisted of blended families in the Wichita Falls, Texas, area who were invited and accepted the invitation to participate.

Definition of Terms

Alliance. "A relationship in which two people share a common interest not shared by the third party" (Haley, 1976, p. 109).

Blended Family. A family unit which consists of mother, adolescent, and stepfather. Blended families and stepfamilies are synonymous terms as used in this report.

Boundary. "The established rules defining who participates, and how" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 53).

Change. Replacing individual behaviors with new or different responses that tend to improve family interaction.

Coalition. "A process of joint action against a third person" (Haley, 1976, p. 109).

Communication. "The whole range of ways people pass information back and forth; including the information they give and receive, and the ways that information is used" (Satir, 1972, p. 30).

Differentiation of Self. A "concept that defines people according to the degree of fusion, or differentiation, between emotional and intellectual functioning" (Bowen, 1976, p. 65).

Dyadic Relation. The interaction between two individuals that are functioning in an alliance or coalition.

Family Homeostasis. "The relative consistency of the internal environment,...which is maintained by a continuous interplay of dynamic forces...depicting family interaction as a closed information system in which variations in output or behavior are fed back in order to correct the system's response" (Jackson, 1968, p. 1).

Generation. The order of hierarchial power within a

family as it is structured by the family unit (Haley, 1976, p. 109).

Parenting Styles. Four interrelated styles used in this study and evaluated on a continuum of constant movement from telling to selling to participating to delegating (Hersey & Blanchard, 1978).

Telling: An autocratic way of dealing with children by the parent giving all the instructions and not allowing the child to give input.

Selling: A move toward a more democratic position with the parent giving the child reasons why he should participate in the requested activity. In this style, the child is permitted to ask questions.

Participating: Both parent and child working together toward the mutual agreement and accomplishment of a given task.

Delegating: The parent's allowing the child to assume full responsibility for getting the job done without the parent's constant supervision (Hersey & Blanchard, 1978).

Power Struggle. The maneuvering of individuals in a relationship to gain control of that relationship and achieve a position of superiority (Foley, 1974, p. 80).

Stress. The intensity of the familial tension or pressure that evolves from the interaction of family members in either a positive or negative way.

Triangulation. "...a three-person emotional configuration,...the molecule or the basic building block of any emotional system,...the smallest stable relationship system. It is the shifting from one person to another in the triangle during 'periods of stress' because the outsider position is the most comfortable and most desired in order to escape tension in the twosome" (Bowen, 1976, p. 75).

Assumptions

1. People can make change in short periods of time.
2. All people learn and modify behavior at the same rate of speed.
3. A multiple test battery would not create a problem in the analysis of data.
4. People want to help improve their family dynamics.

Summary

Chapter I described the American stepfamily as being in need of an adequate parenting model. To provide this parenting model a systematic program of communication skills should be developed which would enable the blended family to improve parenting skills, sending and receiving messages, resolving discipline issues, accepting responsibility for behavior and improving the child-parent-stepparent relationship within the family. The FLET program is designed to develop these skills and to provide each participant with alternatives for improving successful communication patterns within the stepfamily.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Rationale

The role of the American family is radically changing. The transitional changes, as reported by Visher & Visher (1979) are "difficult for human beings, . . . each individual copes with stresses in personally determined ways" (p. x). "One out of seven children" (p. vii) in school comes from blended families, and there are approximately "15 million children living in blended families" (p. xviii). An examination of statistics related to blended families identifies the possibilities for stress in the American family. It is estimated that 75% of the people forming nuclear families divorce; "80% of the divorced persons remarry; 60% of these remarriages involve an adult with physical custody of one or more children" (p. xviii); and "40% of second marriages end in divorce within four years" (p. xix). Attention will be directed toward this ever increasing group in their transitional familial changes.

It seems there must be a basis for the increase of stepfamilies within the American culture. This increase has been cause for concern among researchers who study the stepfamily's stress. First, one would want to know how early influences of childhood training affect family development. Second, one would be concerned with how well the family

groups communicate with each other and what effect their communication has on family stability. Third, one would be interested in learning what are the needs of individuals within the stepfamily that affect family unity.

Blended Families

Stepfamily Needs

Mead (1970) and Stern (1978) suggested that there is a real difference in the methods by which the nuclear family and the stepfamily function. Several suggestions were given that would create a different approach for stepfamilies. Fast & Cain (1966) suggested that the stepfamily be thought of as a structurally different type of childrearing unit. Murray Bowen (1980) suggested that families be thought of as "a unit and not a collection of individuals" in order for the family to receive the help it needs to maintain a healthy homeostasis (p. xiii). Stern (1978) suggested that the stepparent develop friendship with stepchildren before attempting discipline, while Messinger (1976) further expanded this concept when he stated that guilt feelings in remarriage could be turned from negative to positive by the stepparent's developing a friendship with the children. Schwartz (1968) pointed out that "there are no simple solutions to the complications and the adjustments necessitated in divorce and remarriage". These complications and necessary adjustments, therefore, substantiate the need for good communication skills in the stepfamily.

Stepparent: The Stepfather

When two or more families are blended together, the results in parenting is commonly termed "stepparenting". The literature is in agreement that the stepparent/stepchild terms are not appropriate for describing the relationships in most blended families. Bohannon (1970) points out that "kinship terms are inadequate". He suggested that the term stepparent be applied only when there is a death. "In a divorce, there is not a replacement, but an additional parent. This relationship is difficult for society" (p. 29). Duberman (1974) and Visher & Visher (1979) both agree with the inadequacy of the "step" term; but, no researcher has adequately supplied an acceptable alternative for the naming of members in a blended family.

Since there is no alternative title, the stepparent must overcome several barriers: one being the term "step" parent. Simon (1964) observed that until a divorced male overcomes stepfather prejudice, his role in the step family will be extremely limited. This is sometimes viewed as being a parent substitute and at other times as a family intruder. As a result of being torn between two families, a common distress of the stepfather is the demand for monetary support from both families. If he gives to the stepchildren, he has guilt feelings of his abandonment of his natural children. If he gives to his children, he has neglected his new family commitment. This guilt is a heavy burden for

stepfathers. Visher & Visher (1979) conclude that "often these fathers are unaware of the important effect it is having on them in their new relationship" (p. 100). Thus this situation suggests the importance of the blended family's being competent in communication and parenting skills.

The Remarried Family

In the remarried family, Duberman (1974) predicts that the family is likely to become existential: that is, "its members are likely to be less dependent on each other and more concerned with themselves" (p. 33). The remarriage produces some real fears due to the blended families bringing their pasts with them. Satir (1970) states that "with our current forms of human interaction, our fears, our suspicions, and our past are working against us" (p. 66). "It isn't that we are a culture bounded by the past and can't turn loose...." "...We have all the resources for the needed change, but we do not yet know how to use them" (p. 66). Stern (1978) suggested that the remarried family will have to deal with the changing autonomy that produces a threat to the children. Mead (1970) identified the step-parent's and stepchildren's problem of not getting along with each other as being related to an absence of a primary developmental dependency. She said, "...in our family system the child develops an overdependence on the parent. Our children are not prepared to trust anyone but their own

parent" (p. 102). Thus the need exists for developing a positive marital relationship in order to help the children accept the parental shift.

Nye (1957) found that "if the remarried parents are satisfied with each other, the children are likely to benefit". Nye further indicated that there were more adjustments in blended families than in intact families, but that the greatest adjustment is needed in unhappy families. Bernard (1956), Goode (1964), and Burchinal (1964) all found that the remarried mothers had improved the lives for both themselves and their children.

Family Reorganization

When divorce occurs, there is a reorganization of the entire family, the extended family as well as the nuclear family. With this rearrangement, there must be the development of a new set of standards and values with a redefinition of roles and relationships. With the reevaluation of present values and relationships, there comes a myriad of new problems. According to Schwartz (1968), one such problem is that the divorced persons usually, even when remarried, continue to be bound together with unresolved emotional ties; and these are experienced through their natural children. This social dilemma presents a real challenge. If a parent has difficulty separating emotionally, this tends to compound difficulties in the children. The problem of sharing maintains many potentially destructive ties for

the natural parents, children, and the stepparents. Landis (1960), researching another problem of remarriage, asked the questions, "Are children better off in homes in which the parents are unhappy together, or is it better for the children to live with one, happy or unhappy, divorced parent? Are unhappy spouses good parents?" He suggested that the "children from divorced homes show no more psychological damage than children in intact unhappy homes" (pp. 7-9). Thus the remarriage and subsequent family reorganization affects the unhappy family in a positive way.

Stepparenting Issues

Parenting Styles

The issue of parenting styles becomes most important in the blending of two or more families. Fast & Cain (1966) concluded that stepfamily relationships cannot be patterned after those of the traditional nuclear family. As previously stated they proposed that the stepfamily should be considered as a structurally different type of childrearing unit. The "stepparent who is determined to be a substitute parent, however skillful his efforts, cannot succeed totally" (p. 488). One of the problems is that the new partner in a blended family tends to bring into the second marriage the ideas and parenting skills that he used in the previous marriage. These methods tend to be unsuccessful (Duberman, 1974; Messinger, 1976; Visher & Visher, 1979).

Hersey and Blanchard (1978) describe the parenting styles in four quadrants on a continuum. The continuum contains telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Through movement along the continuum, the researchers observed that the parenting style was changing from an authoritarian to a democratic style in leadership. These researchers believe that the more responsibility the parents delegate to the children, the more responsible the children will become; and, consequently, more harmonious family relationships will be developed.

The style of parenting that the blended family uses often determines the positive or negative relationships that exist within the family. Stern (1978) stated that "the stepfather who moves slowly and attempts to make a friend of the child before moving to control him has a better chance of having his discipline integrated into the sentimental order of the family life" (p. 80).

Another consideration of the remarried family's parenting style is Simon's (1964) comment on the study of Bowerman and Irish in which stepfamilies were found to have more stress, ambivalence, and lower cohesiveness when compared to intact families. Simon believed that "while these characteristics are considered negative ones for children in nuclear families, they are positive for children in stepfamilies. It seems likely that low cohesiveness is a particularly positive element, since stepchildren need psychol-

ogical space in which to move back and forth from one household to another" (p. 235).

Parental Role Expectancy

Parental role expectancy is an area of concern for blended families. Wives often view the stepfathers as rescuers, a role in which the stepfather finds it difficult to live (Mowatt, 1972). Fast & Cain (1966) proposed that the stepfamily should be considered as a structurally different type of childrearing unit. The stepparent's success in assuming the parent role is largely dependent on mutual acceptance by the spouse and the stepchild (p. 488). Clarke-Stewart (1973) noted that the divorce decree does not create a single parent family unit but rather creates two separate parents between which the children are pulled. There seems to be no acceptable role model for both the single-parent family and blended families to follow (Fast & Cain, 1966). The emerging patterns that seem to be acceptable are those of the former intact family system. The role expectancy of either mother, father, or stepparent does not appear to have the stability needed to help the blended family through the changing role expectancies.

Fast & Cain (1966) studied fifty families in a child guidance center and concluded that (1) role-learning opportunities are available to natural parents that are not available to stepparents; (2) stepparents have difficulty in developing a stable pattern of feeling, thinking, and acting

toward stepchildren; (3) stepparents tend to be ambivalent, not knowing whether to act as parent, stepparent, or non-parent; and (4) uncertainty about appropriate role and behavior of the stepparents may lead to "intrapsychic and interpersonal difficulties which often appeared to augment problems based on the stepparents' uncertainties about their appropriate roles as parents" (p. 478).

Family Communication Patterns

In the intact family, communication is a reoccurring problem. Within the blended family, the communication breakdown often becomes a real familial dysfunction. Olim (1968) studied family communication within blended families from the humanistic viewpoint. It was his finding that since children are by nature doubters and constantly asking questions, the "self-actualizing concept" of individualization would be easy to teach to these children because the selfactualizing person is, above all, a doubter. It was his conclusion that if parents rear children in an environment relatively free of constraints, there would be a generation of better adjusted people and better interacting family units.

Much of the time, the communication problems within the dysfunctional family system are due to a hidden agenda (Bohannon & Erickson, 1978). A communication approach to changing the family system is consistent with family authorities (Dreikers and Stolz, 1964; Haley, 1976). Likewise,

the most constructive approach for teaching families to be friends with each other is through the communication model (Watzlawick, Beavin, Jackson, 1967).

Messinger (1976) described how she thought that friendship on the part of the stepparent would tend to lessen the guilt feelings experienced by the male co-parent in blended families. She further described the problem of communication within this new family unit as one that does not belong only to the stepfather, but is a difficulty also shared by the children.

Friending: A Needed Technique

"Some couples have more friends than others, some have more friends in common, and some people are just more friendly than others", said Ackerman (1963), as he described what he thought would enhance marital success. This "shared friendship" tends to produce more successes than when the couple has separate friendships, which result in less social control (p. 13). A conclusion from Ackerman's research, therefore, might be that as the new married partners relate to each other as friends, the greater the possibility that they as parents will be able to relate to their children as friends.

Bronfenbrenner (1970) reviewed the research studies focusing upon early intervention programs, such as Head Start. He concluded that the only programs which had positive long term results were those which involved parents in

the efforts. Leler and Johnson (1979) describe the research of parent-child interactions and relationships, and they observed "that they have shown significant correlations between the child's competence and parent-child interaction factors such as parental warmth and acceptance, use of positive reinforcement, encouragement or verbalizations, and control which uses reasoning and is not too restrictive" (p. 257).

Family Stress

The development of friendship within the family system tends to reduce the stress that is experienced. "In addition to the stress 'inherited' from past generations, and that experienced while moving through the family life cycle, there is, of course, the stress of living in this place at this time" (Carter, McGoldrick, 1980). Much of the stress that families struggle against could be eliminated in part by developing a wide range of stress reducing techniques. Each member within the system would need to have communication skills adequate enough to monitor and "recognize our stress level with special self-monitoring tools such as feelings, total behaviors, and body data" (Greenberg, 1980, p. x). The apparent largest single factor of unhappiness in our culture seems to point toward the misuse of stress (Parrino, 1979). Parrino said, "to one extent or another, we are all victims of stress. Stress takes its toll in myriad ways... It is not necessarily unhealthy. The ma-

chinery that powers the adjustments we make in coping with life's demands is equally capable of returning the system to a state of equilibrium and adaptive functioning. Stress can be the stimulus that motivates you to change in a positive direction" (p. 23).

Family Discipline

One of the most perplexing problems of the blended family is the achievement of satisfactory discipline (Visher & Visher, 1979, p. 114). Historically, the male has occupied the role of chief disciplinarian after the fact. Males usually handed out the punishment; the females were the caretakers and thus the actual disciplinarians.

In remarriage, the males tend to move in and assume the role of disciplinarian without first establishing a positive relationship with the new wife's children; "a gradual movement into discipline would help both mother and child" (Stern, 1978, p. 96). Had the males first made friends with the children, the problems associated with discipline would be lessened.

Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper (1971) point out that the parent's approach to discipline is usually the problem. Dreikurs and his associates suggest the use of "mutual control" with logical and natural consequences of behavior as the appropriate approach (p. 80).

Dreikurs and Stoltz (1964) describe the need for parents to change their parenting style with their children in

order to improve discipline. Stern's (1978) idea of integration of a stepfather into the ongoing system of mother and child was to help resolve discipline problems. She interviewed thirty stepfather families and contrasted integrative with disintegrative methods of discipline. It was concluded that stepfathers who came in and attempted to discipline stepchildren before first establishing a "bond of friendship" failed to be integrated into the family unit.

Discipline is often the battle ground for family disruptions. Visher & Visher (1979) believe that one of the causes is due to the stepfather's not moving into the coalition of mother-child more slowly. In order to facilitate the proper discipline, a communicative relationship must be developed. "The stepchild's behavior may be a way of 'testing' the stepfather. Misbehavior can be a plea for attention as a substitute for love, if the latter does not seem to be available in sufficient quantities" (p. 114).

Haley (1976) said, "every family must deal with the issue of organizing in a hierarchy and rules must be worked out about who is primary in status and power and who is secondary" (p. 103). In this statement, Dreikurs would likely see Haley's concept of hierarchy as a democratic process with the parents in control and delegating responsibility to each family member. This delegation of responsibility and hierarchy of power tend to relate in four areas: (1) establishing the power boundaries; (2) creating a posi-

tive atmosphere for personal acceptance within the family, especially in matters of discipline; (3) allowing the children the opportunity to accept their own responsibility for their behavior; and (4) letting the children know what the logical and natural consequences for this behavior will be (Dreikurs, et al, 1959).

It follows then that the key concept of discipline seems to be a need to "teach responsibility" (Dreikurs & Cassel, 1972). "We can teach responsibility only by giving (children) opportunities to accept responsibilities themselves" (p. 78).

Related Issues

The transition from a single-parent family to the blended family presents a homeostatic challenge. The homeostasis is forced to change radically when the family is changed from a single-parent to a blended family. In a study of eighty-eight Caucasian couples in Cleveland, Ohio, Duberman (1974, 1975) pointed out that an area of needed research was how "members of a new family go about forming themselves into a primary group" (p. 4). The development of this new orientation presents an interesting problem, according to Visher & Visher (1979). "Past experiences in a family of origin and in a former marriage influence feelings and behavior in a subsequent stepfamily; and, as a result, individuals in a stepfamily bring with them personal ways of reacting to spouses, parents, and children" (p. 35).

These problems, centered around the development of primary groups, are brought about by a change in homeostasis. Von Bertalanffy (1968) points out that the "ability of the family system to ensure both continuity and growth is derived from a dynamic equilibrium between two functions common to all systems: a tendency toward homeostasis (H) and a capacity for transformation (T)" (p. 29). When a system has established itself in a nuclear family and the family is suddenly uprooted and rearranged into a single-parent system, the homeostasis once again must make an equilibrium adjustment. After a period of transformation, the family unit may settle down. In a remarriage, this homeostasis is disturbed once again and transformation must now take place in the blended family. Andolfi (1980) points out that "to achieve change in family group, the existing relationship between homeostasis and transformation should be modified in favor of the latter and vice versa; in order to stabilize and maintain the new structure, the H/T relationship should be modified in favor of the former. Consequently, every change or adjustment is preceded by a temporary state of imbalance between H & T. The degree of imbalance depends on the significance of the change and consequent stabilization that takes place" (p. 30). As parents and children understand this change and resettling, the transition into stepfamilies will become more easily adaptable.

One resistance that children have toward the stepparent seems to be in this area of homeostasis/transformation. The children tend to want to keep their system as it is in favor of their freedom and new found discipline within the single-parent family. Stern (1978) points out that "when the stepfather enters the picture, the single-parent family is lost. While the mother may be willing to relinquish some of her autonomy after the marriage, older children are usually not so inclined. They test the situation to see where the power lies" (p. 50).

The homeostasis imbalance and transition become one of the most frequently experienced difficulties of the blended family. The family struggles to establish a new homeostasis. In so doing, they often exemplify power struggles, coalitions, generate feelings of rejection, and a host of other stressors.

Family Bonding

Family bonding, as described by Visher & Visher (1979), takes place during the single family years and now gets disrupted by the new male intruder. This bonding in some cases is very strong. In order for the male to become a part of the family unit, he must be accepted gradually. Some men attempt to "storm the barricade" in a "do or die" attempt to force their acceptance. These men usually find themselves moving toward another divorce. Stern (1978) points out that the first task of the stepfamily is to

achieve "integration". This is her way of describing the transformations and homeostasis in operation. "This is a family group which has a set of norms or a "sentimental order", an attachment to the unity, status within the unit, and a clear idea of who is in the family and who is not" (p. 55). Because the new stepparent is an outsider, he must ease into the group. Stern believes that discipline is the key to the integration process, which may never be achieved. Thus how the male partner approaches the new family unit determines his acceptance and how the blended family reorganizes.

Boundaries/Power/Hierarchy

Research has indicated that a common difficulty in family structures is the way they are organized (Simon, 1964). Haley (1976) points out that "in any organization the members are not equal" (p. 22). Consequently, within family structure, there must be the development of boundaries. Satir (1972) calls these boundaries "rules; this is the way a family gets business done" (p. 96).

As the family attempts to "maintain an internal balance", the boundaries may tend to be ill-defined. Jackson (1968) thought that families operated within certain limits or parameters which tended to help the family boundaries, as a system, with interlocking, triangled relationships. He suggests that the family members not spend their energy in "attacking their partners but to shore up his own poorly

defined ego boundaries. It means learning to respond and not react" (Bowen, 1976, p. 39). This reduces the power struggle because "it forces the other to relate at a higher level of maturity" (Foley, 1974, p. 117).

Stern (1978) observed that the power struggle over boundaries in the stepfamily produced a double bind. He suggested that the power struggle could be removed, "if the stepfather would attempt to first integrate himself in the family and then develop a stepfather-friend relationship with the child" (p. 50).

Thus family system researchers suggest that when families establish a hierarchy with its power and boundaries clearly understood, the family unit can develop functional organization. From this organization successful discipline evolves.

Summary

In Chapter II the needs of blended families as described in the literature were outlined under three headings: blended families, stepparenting issues, and related issues. The reoccurring themes that were prevalent in the literature are described as the importance of parenting styles that could promote change, effective ways of communicating, assistance in making a smoother transition into a new homeostatis, improved parental discipline, ways for the children and stepfather to become friends, and reduction of stress in the blended family system.

The major difficulty in establishing a blended family was pointed out to be the integration of two or more family units into a new system and the stress created by this blending. It was suggested that family stress could be reduced if there were training programs designed to help these families make the transition from being divorced or widowed into remarriage.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY FOR COLLECTION AND TREATMENT OF DATA

The rationale for this study is to determine the significance of a communication skills program, FLET. This study was to evaluate FLET's effectiveness in altering parenting styles, enhancing family communication, promoting marital adjustment, and reducing stress. The review of literature presented in Chapter II suggested that the blending of two or more families creates a stressful situation. Therefore, this study undertook an educational treatment program intended to reduce stress associated with the blending of families.

Procedure for Collection of Data

Population

The target population consisted of blended families living in Wichita Falls, Texas, including Sheppard Air Force Base. Research indicated that approximately one third of the adolescent students in the public school population in Wichita Falls lives in blended families (Seddon, Note 1). . Consequently, it was determined that the family constellation of 100 Caucasian stepfamilies met the criteria established to facilitate this study. Each family considered for the study specifically included these elements: mother was parent; father was stepparent; child was adolescent. Letters

were sent inviting these families to participate in project FLET. Seventy-six blended families responded by either calling the researcher's office or returning the letter indicating their interest in participating. From this population a random assignment was made; however, twelve families notified the researcher of their interest, but scheduling problems prohibited their participation, thus leaving a population of 64 stepfamilies.

The following groups were the result of random assignment: experimental, $n=42$; and control, $n=22$. Out of the 64 families who chose to participate, 44 finished the study; thus, producing a 69% completion rate. The 31% attrition rate was due to (1) scheduling, (2) non-attendance of one or more members of the mother-stepfather-adolescent triad in each family, (3) failure to complete and/or turn in test battery, and (4) self termination from the study. The classification of the 44 respondent families was experimental, $n=27$; and control, $n=17$. In each stepfamily only the parent, stepparent, and one adolescent was involved in the study, thus 132 subjects participated.

Collection of Data

The data were collected by distributing to the randomly selected groups a test packet which included four paper-pencil tests with instructions for completion of tests. The four instruments utilized were the Family Game, Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment

Scale, and Behavior Profile Inventory. Each respondent family was allowed to complete the pretest at home and return the test results to the investigator the following week. This procedure was repeated as the posttest for the experimental and control groups following the five weeks of the FLET training program which was given to the experimental group.

Instrumentation

A perusal of instrumentation literature revealed there is no single instrument sufficiently discriminatingly designed to assess and differentiate four of the complex areas of family living: parenting style, communication, marital adjustment, and stress level. Therefore, a test battery of four instruments was selected to evaluate FLET's effectiveness in promoting change in parenting style, communication, marital adjustment and stress level. Each instrument will be described according to these criteria: (1) what is being measured; (2) how the scales are rated; and (3) reliability and validity. Inclusive instrumentation descriptions are presented in the following paragraphs.

Family Game

The aim of the four subtests of the Family Game is to identify the four parent leadership styles, with associated behaviors related to the child's maturity level (Hersey & Blanchard, 1978). This scale identifies parenting styles in four categories: telling, selling, participating, and dele-

gating. Each subscale was developed on a continuum allowing the subject to determine the specific parenting style used in their family. The data derived from this instrument were an ordinal scale; thus the results of the 12 situational vignettes were the ranking of the respondents' perception of the four parenting styles as demonstrated by the parent and stepparent. Each style is characterized as parental leadership.

The Telling Style. This leadership style is characterized by one-way communication, which is high directive and low supportive (p. 22). The parent carefully defines the child's roles. This tends to correspond to traditional authoritarian style with decisions being made by parents.

The Selling Style. This leadership style is characterized by parent attempts to get the child to do a task using high directive and high supportive two-way communication. This parenting style allows the child to question, reason, and become involved in responsible decision making (p. 22).

The Participating Style. This leadership style is characterized by the participating style which is high supportive and low directive two-way communication, making the process a shared decision. In this style the child has both the ability and knowledge to share ideas with the parent about the particular situation. The child is responsible.

The Delegating Style. This leadership style is characterized by the highest level of maturational functioning, using low supportive and low directive parent intervention. In this leadership function the parent defines the problem and/or needs, and the child decides the when, where, and how of doing the task (p. 23). The parent in charge delegates responsibility, and the child assumes personal responsibility for the ensuing behavior.

Reliability and Validity. There were no reliability and validity reports given in the test battery (LRC, Note 2) or in the manual by Hersey & Blanchard (1978).

Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory

Bienvenu (1969) designed the Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory (PACI) to assess communication in parent-adolescent relationships. This forty-item inventory, which has a theoretical weighted score range from 0-120, contains Form P for parents and Form A for adolescents. A higher total score indicates quality parent-adolescent communication.

The purpose of PACI was to help focus on the communication difficulties in the family constellation. Form A was designed to help the "adolescent focus on his relationship with his parents in a way that promotes better understanding of his interaction with them" (Bienvenu, 1969). "Form P was designed to measure the parent's perceived communication

with the adolescent... and will provide clues to communication failures and patterns in this relationship" (p. 1).

Reliability, Validity, Norms. There are no norms for Form P (Bienvenu, 1969). The norms for Form A are based on 1556 male and female high school students, with a mean communication score by this group of 78.80 and a standard deviation of 21.65 points (p. 1). The t-test for significance of the difference between male and female mean scores resulted in a t of $-.84$ (p. 1). There was no "great variation in mean scores from grade 9 through grade 12" (p. 1).

Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Spanier developed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) "to assess the quality of marriage and other similar dyads" (Spanier 1976). This instrument is reported to measure the process of dyadic movement along a continuum which can be evaluated in terms of proximity to good or poor adjustment (pp. 16-17). The DAS is a 32-item scale weighted with the theoretical range of scores from 0-150, the higher score indicating greater adjustment.

Reliability and Validity. The reliability was determined for each of the component scales as well as the total scale. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was the measure of internal consistency (p. 23). The reliability for the DAS and its component subscales are listed in Table I.

The DAS was validated in three areas: content, criterion, and construct. The content validity included three

judges for considering the items: (1) relevant measures of dyadic adjustment for contemporary relationships, (2) consistency with the nominal definitions for adjustment and its components, and (3) careful wording with appropriate fixed choice responses (p. 22-23).

TABLE I
Reliability Estimates for DAS

Scale	Reliability	No. of Items
Dyadic Consensus Subscale	.90	13
Dyadic Satisfaction Subscale	.94	10
Dyadic Cohesion Subscale	.86	5
Affectional Expression Subscale	.73	4
Dyadic Adjustment Scale	.96	32

The criterion-related validity was measured by administering the scale to a married sample of 218 persons and a divorced sample of 94 persons. Each item correlated significantly with the external criterion of marital status. The divorced sample differed significantly from the married sample ($p < .001$); a t-test was used for assessing differences between sample means (p. 23).

The construct validity was possible, since all items in the DAS were used in previous marital adjustment scales. The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale correlation with

the DAS was .86 among married respondents and .88 among divorced respondents ($p < .001$) (p. 23).

Behavior Profile Inventory

Parrino (1979) reported the Behavior Profile Inventory (BPI) was developed to assist individuals in identifying their hyperresponsive behaviors. The respondent's test score was to indicate their level of agreement on the weighted thirty-item test. The BPI has a theoretical score range from thirty to one hundred fifty, with the higher score indicating higher stress levels. The three general categories of hyperresponsiveness are 30-50, mild; 51-100, moderate; and 101-150, extreme (p. 188, 249-251). In addition to providing a score that indicates a general trend toward excessive stress levels, the individual items provide target behaviors that are pinpointed in order to reduce hyperresponsiveness (p. 188).

Reliability and Validity. Parrino does not report test norms in the manual on this instrument.

Research Design

This quasi-experimental study utilized the pretest-posttest group design (Stanley & Campbell, 1963; Leedy, 1974, p. 152), since the purpose of this research was to assess the effectiveness of a communication-teaching module in modifying family interactions. "A between-group design is essential if there is any reason to suspect differential transfer effects from one condition to another" (Graham,

1977, p. 76). It was determined that a t-test analysis of no significant difference between the experimental and control groups' pretest scores would suggest that the design become a "one-group pretest-posttest design" (Stanley & Campbell, 1963, p. 7), utilizing only the experimental group's pretest and posttest scores. This, in fact, is the resultant study. The design and resultant design can be written:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} R & O_1 & X & O_2 \\ & & & & \\ R & O_3 & & O_4 \end{array}$$

where R = random assigned, X = the independent variable (FLET), and O = the dependent variable. The resultant design would be written:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} R & O_1 & X & O_2 \end{array}$$

(Graham, 1977, p. 65; Stanley & Campbell, 1963, p. 7, 13).

Experimental Group

The stepfamilies in the experimental group were given a packet of four paper-pencil tests with instructions for completion of tests. These families were allowed to complete the evaluations at home and bring the results to the first FLET skills training session. There was a 2½ hour session each week for five weeks. Each skills training session followed the same format: 1 hour session, 30 minute break, and 1 hour session. At the conclusion of the 5 week program, the participants repeated the testing procedure

outlined for the pretest. The results were brought to the researcher's office as the families completed the test.

Control Group

The test packet containing four paper-pencil tests with instructions for completion of the tests was taken to the homes of the 17 families in the control group. The tests were completed within seven days and returned to the researcher's office. At the conclusion of the five week period, the above testing procedure was repeated for the posttest. The results were returned to the researcher's office within seven days.

Analysis of Data

The data were compiled from forty-four experimental and control group families who completed the pretest and post-test battery consisting of Family Game, Parent-Adjustment Communication Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and Behavior Profile Inventory. Two statistics were used in analyzing the data: Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance and t-test for significant difference of means. The Friedman ANOVA was employed with the Family Game since it is ordinal data (Siegel, 1956). The t-test was administered to the remaining three instruments.

A t-statistic was run on the pretest scores of the experimental and control groups to determine if there were significant differences between the groups. Then the analyses of the Friedman and t-test were applied to the pretest

and posttest scores of the experimental group to determine if FLET significantly influenced the respondents' scores.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to set forth the following: (1) procedures for collecting data, (2) instrumentation, and (3) statistical analysis of data. The specific procedures for collecting, identifying, and analyzing the data were outlined by describing the population, sample, experimental design, and treatment of data.

This chapter further described the instruments used in collecting data, the main characteristics which were outlined, noting what each test proposed to measure. The reliability and validity were given with each reported measure when available. The statistics used in the actual analysis of the data were the Friedman ANOVA and t-test.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This study evaluated the effectiveness of a skills training program, FLET. In order to assess the efficiency of FLET, 44 blended families participated in the experiment to determine if, in fact, a family could attain skills that would change parenting styles, improve family communication, promote marital adjustment, and reduce stress. Data are presented under the following headings: (1) general characteristics; (2) assessment, (3) statistical analysis of data, and (4) results.

General Characteristics of Data

Population

The target population consisted of 100 blended families in the Wichita Falls area. The composition of each step-family considered for the study specifically included (1) parent, female; (2) the stepparent, male; and (3) the children, at least one adolescent. Over 100 families were invited, through a personal letter, to participate in project FLET. Seventy-six families responded by contacting the researcher's office indicating their interest in participating in this project. Twelve of the responding families stated their interest but scheduling problems prohibited their participation, leaving a population of 64 families.

The following groups were the result of random assignment: experimental, $n=42$; and control, $n=22$.

Of the 64 families who chose to participate, there was a 31.25 percent attrition rate due to (1) scheduling, (2) non-attendance of three or more sessions without making up absences, (3) failure to complete and/or turn in test battery, and (4) self termination from the study. This left forty-four families (69.8%) completing the program, with the experimental group being, $n=27$; and control, $n=17$. In each stepfamily only the parent, stepparent and one adolescent was involved in the study, for a total of 132 subjects who participated.

Demographic Data

The demographic data describing the 88 parent participants are listed in the four categories of demographic characteristics of the sample on Table II. The males' mean age (40.6 years) was 4.6 years older than the females' (36.0 years), with the male age range being 30 to 53 as compared to the female 28 to 49 years. The women had been married an average of 2.4 times while the men averaged 1.7 times. The males averaged three years more education than the females (15 to 12 years). Forty-six percent of the females and 20 percent of the males were enrolled in some form of higher education at the time of the study.

The demographic data describing the 44 adolescent participants are listed in three categories of demographic

characteristics of population on Table II. The mean age of the adolescents in this study was 14 years, with ages ranging from 12 to 16 years. None of the adolescents had been married, and they had attained a mean grade placement of eight years.

TABLE II
Age, Marital and Educational
Characteristics of Population

Variables	Mean Age	Age Range	Mean Times Married	Mean Years Education
Males	40.6	30-53	1.7	15.0
Females	36.0	28-49	2.4	12.0
Adolescents	14.0	12-16	0.0	8.0

n = 81 (27 males, 27 females, 27 adolescents)

Assessment

Test Instruments

The four instruments utilized were the Family Game, Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and Behavior Profile Inventory. Each of the four instruments measured a corresponding skill that project FLET was designed to improve.

The Family Game assesses parenting styles in four categories: telling (T), selling (S), participating (P), and delegating (D). Hersey & Blanchard (1978) developed



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TABLE III
Experimental Pretest and Posttest Mean
Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory

Variable		Mean	SD	Sem
Stepfather	Pre	84.37	16.14	3.10
	Post	83.25	19.80	3.81
Mother	Pre	88.00	16.12	3.10
	Post	87.29	14.03	2.70
*Adolescent ♂	Pre	66.96	20.00	3.86
	Post	66.00	15.94	3.06
**Adolescent ♀	Pre	64.59	17.71	3.41
	Post	67.74	14.76	2.84

n=81 (27 stepfathers, 27 mothers, 27 adolescents)

*Adolescent ♂ = adolescent perception of stepfather

**Adolescent ♀ = adolescent perception of mother

TABLE IV
Experimental Pretest and Posttest Mean
Scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Variable		Mean	SD	Sem
Husband	Pre	95.11	16.61	3.19
	Post	86.40	14.59	2.80
Wife	Pre	93.88	22.96	4.42
	Post	78.11	21.97	4.22

n = 54 (27 husbands, 27 wives)

better adjustment in marriage (p. 25). Table IV displays the experimental pretest and posttest mean scores of the DAS.

The Behavior Profile Inventory (BPI) is a brief inventory to help individuals assess their perceived stress level. The theoretical range on this instrument is 30-150. Each of the 81 subjects rated themselves. Table V compares the experimental pretest and posttest scores of the BPI--the higher the mean the greater the level of perceived stress.

TABLE V
Experimental Pretest and Posttest Mean
Score on Behavior Profile Inventory

Variable		Mean	SD	Sem
Stepfather	Pre	86.48	10.44	2.01
	Post	85.63	16.25	3.12
Mother	Pre	78.63	15.62	3.00
	Post	84.88	14.03	2.70
Adolescent	Pre	87.00	8.18	1.57
	Post	91.51	6.50	1.25

n = 81 (27 stepfathers, 27 mothers, 27 adolescents)

Statistical Analysis of Data

The data from three test instruments (PACI, BPI, DAS) were first analyzed by a t-test for independent means to detect any group differences; the data on the fourth instru-

ment (FG) were analyzed by the Friedman Two-way Analysis of Variance. The t-test for independent means assessed any significant difference between the pretest scores of the experimental and control groups on each of the three instruments. Since each t ratio yielded no significant difference in the pre treatment group comparison (control vs experimental), a t-test for dependent means was computed between the pre and posttest scores of the experimental groups. The Friedman ANOVA was repeated with the pre and posttest scores of the experimental group assessing the scores of the Family Game instrument.

A significance level of .05 was set for the rejection of each of the four hypotheses in this study. The statistical decision is recorded below for each of the four null hypotheses.

Friedman Two-way Analysis of Variance

The comparison of the pre and posttest scores of the experimental group for the Family Game will be described below with the restatement of Hypothesis One.

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment parenting style test scores, as measured by the Family Game.

Because number of choices in identifying parenting styles is probably not an interval measure of actual parenting behavior, the nonparametric two-way analysis of variance was chosen rather than parametric. The number of subjects

in the three matched groups was 81: i.e., stepfather, mother, and adolescent; each with $N=27$. The results of the Friedman ANOVA are contained in Table VI displaying the ranked sums of each subscale of the Family Game, each respondent's rating of both mother and stepfather, the critical value of $p=7.28$, and the observed values of X . Note that significant values were recorded for mother and adolescents, but not for the stepfather. Therefore, the data failed to reject the null hypothesis for the stepfather

TABLE VI

Friedman Two-way Analysis of Variance
Experimental Pre & Posttest Rank Sums
on Family Game by Respondent Category

		<u>Sum of Ranks</u>				x^2	p
		T	S	P	D		
Stepfather	Pre	62.0	68.5	75.0	64.5	1.73	.05
	Post	46.0	80.0	81.0	63.0	17.82*	
Mother	Pre	36.0	77.5	95.5	61.0	42.18*	.05
	Post	52.0	75.5	75.5	67.0	7.77	
Adolescent	Pre	69.5	67.5	61.5	71.5	0.83	.05
	Post	76.0	69.0	71.0	54.0	5.56	
Adolescent	Pre	61.5	73.5	71.5	63.5	1.88	.05
	Post	57.0	70.0	78.0	64.5	4.60	

*Significant at .05; $X(3) = 7.82$

$n = 81$ (27 stepfathers, 27 mothers, 27 adolescents)

T = Telling, S = Selling, P = Participating, D = Delegating

group. The data did reject the null hypothesis for the mother and both adolescent groups.

t-Test for Dependent Means

The comparisons of the pre and posttest scores of the experimental group for each of the three hypotheses are described in the following tables. The hypotheses are restated for convenience.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment stress test scores as measured by the Behavior Profile Inventory.

The data pertinent to Hypothesis Two is presented in Table VIII. The test for significant differences between the stepfather's and mother's pretest and posttest scores yielded a t ratio of .26 and 1.99. These t ratios did not yield a significant difference at the alpha level of .05. The data failed to reject the null hypothesis.

TABLE VII

t-Test for Dependent Means
Pre and Post Experimental Groups for
Behavior Profile Inventory

Variable	n	Mean Differences	SD	Sem	t^*	p
Stepfather	27	0.851	19.162	3.687	0.23	.819
Mother	27	-6.259	16.358	3.145	-1.99	.057
Adolescent	27	-4.518	9.665	1.860	-2.43**	.022

* t (26) = 2.056

**Significant at .05

The test for the significant difference between the adolescent's pretest and posttest scores yielded a t ratio of 2.43. The result of the adolescent scores did yield a significant difference at .05 level. The data rejected the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis Three: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment communication test scores as measured by the Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory.

The t -test for dependent means was used to evaluate the differences between the pretreatment and posttreatment test scores on the PACI. The test for significant differences between the stepfather's perception of stepparent-adolescent communication yielded a t ratio of .18; the adolescent's perception of stepparent-adolescent communication yielded a t ratio of .21; and adolescent's perception of parent-adolescent communication yielded a t ratio of .66. None of these results yielded a significant difference at the alpha level of .05. The data failed to reject the null hypothesis. Table VIII displays this data.

Hypothesis Four: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment marital adjustment test scores as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

The data pertinent to this hypothesis are displayed in Table IX. The test for significant differences between the

TABLE VIII
t-Test for Dependent Means
Pre-Post Experimental Groups for
Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory

Variable	Mean Differences	SD	Sem	<u>t</u>	<u>p</u>
Stepparent	1.111	22.392	4.309	.26	.799
Parent	0.703	20.210	3.889	.18	.858
*Adolescent	0.963	24.393	4.694	.21	.839
**Adolescent	-3.148	24.666	4.747	.66	.513

Significant at .05; $t(26) = 2.056$

$n = 81$ (27 stepparents, 27 parents, 27 adolescents)

*Adolescent = perception of stepfather communication

**Adolescent = perception of parent communication

TABLE IX
Dependent Sample t-Test for
Pre-Post Experimental Group Measured by
Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Variable	n	Mean Differences	SD	Sem	<u>t*</u>	<u>p</u>
Husband	27	8.703	23.959	4.591	1.90	.069
Wife	27	15.777	30.312	5.833	2.70**	.012

* $t(26) = 2.056$

**Significant at .05

husbands' perception of marital adjustment yielded a t ratio of 1.90. This result did not yield a significant difference at the alpha level of .05. The data failed to reject the null hypothesis.

The wives' perception of marital adjustment yielded a t ratio of 2.70. This result yielded a significant difference at the alpha level of .05, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. Thus this instrument indicated that there was a significant change for wives but not for husbands.

Results

This chapter presented the findings of the statistical treatment of the collected data evaluating the effectiveness of a skills training program, FLET. This evaluation revealed that the effects of project FLET produced no significant difference between the pretreatment and posttreatment scores on parenting style of the stepparent and parent as measured by the Family Game.

There was no significant difference on the stepfather's and mother's stress reduction as measured by the Behavior Profile Inventory. However, there was a significant difference found in the adolescent's scores, suggesting that a skills training program like FLET could affect the stress level within the stepfamily.

The Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory did not indicate a significant difference in the stepparent-adolescent and parent-adolescent test scores. The results suggest that the content of FLET did not significantly change communication behavior as measured by the PACI.

The examination of the data on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale showed that there was no significant difference in the

husband's perception of marital adjustment; however, the wife's perception of marital adjustment showed a significant difference. These results indicated that the relationship's adjustment could be significantly affected for wives by a skills training intervention such as FLET.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter has been divided into six major headings: (1) summary, (2) findings, (3) conclusions, (4) discussion, (5) limitations, and (6) recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a communication skills program called FLET, the objective of which was to determine if FLET could alter significant behavior within the blended family. The central themes which were analyzed were the altering of parenting styles, the enhancing of family communication, the improving of marital adjustment, and the reduction of family stress.

To evaluate this skills program, over one hundred families were invited to participate in project FLET. From the sixty-four blended families who accepted the invitation, the following groups were the result of random selection and assignment: experimental, $n=42$; and control, $n=22$. Of the 192 respondents who chose to participate, there was a 31.3% attrition rate due to (1) scheduling, (2) non-attendance of three or more sessions without attending make-up sessions, (3) failure to complete and/or turn in test battery, and (4) self termination from the study. Thus the forty-four families (132 subjects) completing the program were classified as experimental, $n=27$; and control, $n=17$.

Both the experimental and control group families were given a packet containing four paper-pencil tests with instructions for completion of tests. Each respondent family was allowed to complete the pretest at home and return the test results to the investigator the following week. This procedure was repeated for the experimental and control posttest following the five weeks of FLET skills training given the experimental group.

The research design for this quasi-experimental study involved the following six components: (1) development of a communication skills program (FLET), to help improve blended family interactions in parenting styles, parent-adolescent communication, marital adjustment, and stress reduction; (2) selection of instruments that would measure family interaction and/or specific behavioral change; (3) selection of the 44 stepfamily subjects; (4) treatment of subject with FLET; (5) collection of data; and (6) statistical analysis of the data utilizing Friedman Analysis of Variance and the t-test of dependent comparisons for differences between pre and post experimental data and testing at the .05 level of significance.

Findings

Four hypotheses were developed for this study. To test for significant difference on each hypothesis, the Friedman was used on H_{01} and the t statistic was applied to H_{02} -

H₀₄. The hypothesis will be restated with the significant results.

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment parenting styles as measured by The Family Game.

Decision. Stepparent perception of parenting style change: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Parent perception of parenting style change: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Adolescent perception of male stepparent's parenting style change: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Adolescent perception of female parent's parenting style change: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

The parenting styles of either the parent or stepparent did not show a significant change during the five-week skills training program.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment stress scores as measured by the Behavior Profile Inventory.

Decision. Stepfather perception of stress level: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Mother perception of stress level: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Adolescent perception of stress level: rejecting of the null hypothesis.

The stepfather's and mother's stress did not change significantly during the treatment period of five weeks. The adolescent scores changed sufficiently enough to demonstrate a significant difference in stress scores over the five-week period. The adolescent experienced an increase in stress.

Hypothesis Three: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment communication test scores as measured by the Parent-Adolescent Communication Inventory.

Decision. Stepparent perception of communication with adolescent: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Parent perception of communication with adolescent: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Adolescent perception of stepparent communication: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Adolescent perception of parent communication: failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis Four: There will be no significant difference in the group's pretreatment and posttreatment marital adjustment test scores as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

Decision. Husband's perception of adjustment: failure to reject null hypothesis.

Wife's perception of adjustment: rejection of the null hypothesis. The wife's perception of adjustment indicated a deterioration of adjustment.

Discussion

Since the variable interactions described in this study apparently responded more independently than hypothesized, a closer look at how specific family variables interact is merited. To implement a skills program that facilitates specific behavioral attitudinal change, one must determine specific variable interactions within the family.

This study demonstrates that attitudinal changes may come about as the result of a skills teaching program; however, the change is not likely to evolve slowly. The oral evaluation of participants supported this position by sharing their perceptions of strengths and of weaknesses in the FLET program. The predominant weakness was length of time to assimilate new concepts and develop practical application of behavioral skills.

Many families agreed that the content discussed in FLET was needed, timely, and helpful in daily living, while the most frequent lament was, "I'm just now getting to the point where I could start gaining from this study." Positive comments, such as these, suggest the following: (1) people do change attitudes and behavior slowly; (2) many people do want to improve the quality of their family life; (3) ideas for change will develop into personal goals when the time is right for each person's receptivity; and (4) some individuals must be motivated to begin the learning process.

During this study one fundamental principle was repeatedly reinforced, i.e., families are in need of learning ways to communicate. Communication skills tend to be (1) of vital interest to families, (2) an acceptable format for family growth, and (3) an urgent need with most families.

The fact that the analysis of data showed project FLET had no significant statistical effect in changing the stepfather's parenting style in relating to the blended family points to the value of this study. The interaction of human relations is apparently too complex to change during the relatively short time span of five weeks.

The 31% attrition rate was due to the complexity of family interactions; i.e. (1) scheduling, (2) non-attendance of three or more sessions by one or more members of the mother-stepfather-adolescent triad without making up absences, (3) failure to complete and/or turn in test battery, and (4) self termination from the study. As these participants dropped out of the project, they were asked to give a reason for termination. Some respondents stated that they had terminated due to an escalation of existing family problems. Others stated "that if the whole family isn't going to work at improvement, why attend." These comments reflect a basic attitude of dysfunctional a family is, the greater the difficulty to keep them involved. A self improvement study of sufficient time in growth is needed to assist those families in growth.

The literature describes friending or being a friend to the stepfamily as an important alternative to stepparenting (Ackerman, 1963; Messinger, 1976; Stern, 1978). Therefore, project FLET was designed to teach an alternative approach to parenting, with the end result being improved communication and the development of friendship between family members, especially the stepparent and adolescent.

Conclusion

This study evaluated a communication skills program called FLET to determine if it could change parenting styles, enhance family communication, improve marital adjustment, and reduce the level of family stress. The data showed no statistical significance of improvement in these four areas for all family members.

An analysis of the data indicates that the respondents finishing project FLET were relatively healthy families; thus, accounting for the higher pretest scores and the regression toward the mean on the posttest scores. All participants are given an opportunity to alleviate any stress created by the study.

Limitations

The most limiting factor of this study was the length of time for the communication skills program to effectively become assimilated into family life. People tend to change slowly over long periods of time; some individuals require longer time frames than others (Patterson, 1971, p. 1). New

concepts may be easily learned and assimilated if subjects are not confused with too many new ideas at once. However, for many participants, most of these concepts were new material, thus presenting a flooding phenomenon which tended to reduce the learning impact.

The teaching modality chosen for this study may not be tenable for all learners. Several participants did not read the handouts or practice the assignments. The experiential learning process seemed to be more openly received by those who were still involved in an educational learning process.

Using a test battery consisting of four instruments and a demographic questionnaire was over-whelming for many families, and this produced a problem in collecting completed test results. There was no single instrument that could adequately measure human interaction that related to the varied attitudinal change, which FLET addressed.

The busy schedules that large numbers of families maintain reduced the probability of a whole-hearted commitment toward a personal growth program. Many members attended out of respect for a family member who asked that they attend with them.

Moreover, it may be erroneous to assume that step-families would accept change if they were offered an alternative for improvement of their family relationships.

The difficulties that change presents to some individuals may be too great a challenge. It appeared that sever-

al would have changed their attitudes and resultant behavior if the changing had required very little or no effort on their part.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are presented for future research:

1. Develop a more precise instrument that would facilitate the use of a systems approach to the study of the family. Family interactions need to be identifiable without a massive bombardment of instrumentation.

2. Establish a longer interval for teaching concepts and skill development. Comparative lengths of time could be researched to determine which length of time offers optimum learning for attitudinal change.

3. Replicate the study in several different size groups to determine if the group size affects the participants ability to synthesize skills that will change attitudes and behavior.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
Box 23717 TWU Station
Denton, Texas 76204

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Name of Investigator: Elmer L. Howell Center: Denton

Address: 62 Edgewater Drive Date: July 30, 1981

Lakeside City, Texas 76308

Dear Mr. Howell:

Your study entitled Changing Family Dynamics: An Impact Study of the Internal Interactions Produced in a Divorced Family by a Remiarriage has been reviewed by a committee of the Human Subjects Review Committee and it appears to meet our requirements in regard to protection of the individual's rights.

Please be reminded that both the University and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare regulations typically require that signatures indicating informed consent be obtained from all human subjects in your studies. These are to be filed with the Human Subjects Review Committee. Any exception to this requirement is noted below. Furthermore, according to DHEW regulations, another review by the Committee is required if your project changes.

Any special provisions pertaining to your study are noted below:

 Add to informed consent form: No medical service or compensation is provided to subjects by the University as a result of injury from participation in research.

 Add to informed consent form: I UNDERSTAND THAT THE RETURN OF MY QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTITUTES MY INFORMED CONSENT TO ACT AS A SUBJECT IN THIS RESEARCH.

✓ The filing of signatures of ^{adult} subjects with the Human Subjects Review Committee is not required. *Signatures of minors must be filed.*

 Other:

 No special provisions apply.

cc: Graduate School
Project Director
Director of School or
Chairman of Department

Sincerely, *mt*
Marilyn Hinson
Chairman, Human Subjects
Review Committee
at Denton

APPENDIX B

Consent Form
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE

(Form A -- Written presentation to subject)

Consent to Act as a Subject for Research and Investigation:

The following information is to be read or to read by the subject. One copy of this form, signed and witnessed, must be given to each subject. A second copy must be retained by the investigator for filing with the Chairman of the Human Subjects Review Committee. A third copy may be made for the investigator's files.

1. I hereby authorize Elmer Lloyd Howell
(Name of person (s) who will perform
procedure (s) or investigation (s))

to perform the following procedure (s) or investigation (s):
(Describe in detail)

- (Pretest) 1. A battery of test will be given taking about 1½ to 2 hrs.
(Treatment) 2. A 5 week parenting skills program will be given to the
experimental group. Each session will last about 2½ hrs.
(Posttest) 3. At the conclusion of the parenting skills teaching
program, there will be a second battery of test given.
4. The control group, if they choose, may take the parenting
program at the conclusion of the study.

2. The procedure or investigation listed in Paragraph 1 has been explained
to me by ELMER LLOYD HOWELL
(Name)

3. (a) I understand that the procedures or investigations described in
Paragraph 1 involve the following possible risks or discomforts:
(Describe in detail)

The only discomfort will be attending the sessions for the prescribed time.
The only risks are personal awareness of present parenting skills and
family relationships.
The only dissonance would be produced by knowledge of new ideas for
improvement in the family relationships.

(Form A - Continuation)

3. (b) I understand that the procedures and investigations described in Paragraph 1 have the following potential benefits to myself and/or others:

Help me improve in my communication with my family & others.
Increase my awareness of how I can better get along in the world.

3. (c) I understand that - No medical service or compensation is provided to subjects by the university as a result of injury from participation in research.

4. An offer to answer all of my questions regarding the study has been made. If alternative procedures are more advantageous to me, they have been explained. I understand that I may terminate my participation in the study at any time.

Subject's Signature

Date

(If the subject is a minor, or otherwise unable to sign, complete the following):

Subject is a minor (age____), or is unable to sign because:

Signatures (one required)

Father

Date

Mother

Date

Guardian

Date

Witness (one required)

Date

APPENDIX C

ELMER LLOYD HOWELL, M.ED.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY COUNSELOR

1901 10th Street Suite 102, Wichita Falls, Tx.

May I take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Elmer Lloyd Howell: a Ph.D. Candidate in Marriage and Family Counseling at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas; an adjunct instructor for VRJC (Vernon Regional Junior College, Sheppard AFB); and a Marriage & Family Therapist in Wichita Falls.

As part of the requirements for my dissertation research, I have developed a family communication skills model called Families Living Effectively Together (FLET). The enclosed brochure will describe the aims and objectives of this exciting project.

Since your name was recommended to me as a family that is interested in learning and experiencing new, exciting ways of self-improvement, I am offering you an opportunity to participate in this program.

There will be no risks of you or your family, no costs, and no physical or emotional stress. This program is absolutely FREE. The only thing you and your family will need to do is either participate in a group that takes a personal inventory (a battery of tests) requiring about two hours or be in a group that will attend a class for 2½ hours each Tuesday evening for five weeks.

All you need to do is read the enclosed brochure, decide to participate, set aside some time for the testing, and call me at 766-1886 for confirmation of enrollment.

You may wonder by now what do I get from all this FREE work on my part. I get to use your test scores (unidentified) to statistically determine if project FLET actually helps families live effectively together as friends.

Call me at 766-1886 for more information and to enroll.

Sincerely,

Elmer Lloyd Howell

YOUR FAMILY IS INVITED. . . .

TO PARTICIPATE...."LIVING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER"

TO EXPERIENCE....."LIVING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER"

TO DISCOVER....."LIVING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER"

- *FLET is a Family SKILLS Model designed to help families consider a slightly different approach to family living.
- *FLET is a GROWTH process which motivates each family member to contribute happiness to the family unit.
- *FLET is a fresh approach to an old QUESTION...'how can we all live together successfully'?
- *FLET is a WAY of LIFE...away of daily working, playing, experiencing, laughing, and in general growing together happily and successfully.
- *FLET is PSYCHOLOGICALLY and PHILOSOPHICALLY SOUND. This program employs six basically fundamental principles.
- *FLET allows each family to BUILD on their own VALUE SYSTEM.
- *FLET is a skills development program that UTILIZES already existing family STRENGTHS.
- *FLET teaches each person SKILLS OF:
 - COMMUNICATION...
 - DECISION MAKING...
 - DISCIPLINE...
 - CONFLICT RESOLUTION...
 - POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT...
- *FLET IS DESIGNED TO HELP ALL PEOPLE INTERESTED IN CREATING FUN, EXCITING WAYS OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT IS FLET? Families Living Effectively Together is a New communication skills program for families who want to develop a more effective and exciting way of living.

WHAT WILL THIS PROGRAM COST? It is FREE...No Money.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL FLET TAKE?

1. One group will take a set of tests (personal evaluation) that will take about two hours or less to finish. After five weeks this group will retake the set of tests.

2. A second group will take the pretest, attend a class on Tuesday evenings for five weeks, then take a posttest.

WHICH GROUP WILL I BE IN? Every family will receive an opportunity to attend the class sessions where the skills development will be taught. The families that are in the control group (group 1) will all be notified when the 2nd study group will be. It will be offered in about two weeks following the conclusion of the skills development program.

WILL MY TEST SCORES BE CONFIDENTIAL? Yes, no names will be affixed to the test. A code name will be assigned each test and at the conclusion of the testing all tests and scores will be destroyed.

WHAT INFORMATION FROM THE TEST IS USED? Only the collected test scores in each category. No scores will be used individually.

WHO IS SPONSORING THIS PROGRAM? Elmer Lloyd Howell, a PhD candidate at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Tx. This skills development program is the result of a research project connected with the Ph.D. Dissertation. Howell has lived in Wichita Falls for the past six years. During that time, he has worked as Associate School Psychologist and developed a private practice in Marriage & Family Therapy.

HOW CAN THIS PROGRAM BE FREE? Everything has a cost. Each family gives time to take the test, and Howell gives the Communication Skills to each participating family. This way all are winners.

HOW WILL THIS PROGRAM BENEFIT MY FAMILY?

1. It will enhance the present skills you already have.

2. To Learn successful ways of improving communications.

3. To develop problem solving skills that involve every member of your family.

4. To learn more positive ways of shifting responsibility to each family member -- Thus reducing the need for negative forms of discipline.

5. To explore alternatives in conflict resolution.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN "FAMILIES LIVING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER"?

Project FLET is designed to be effective with any type family: intact, single, divorced, or stepfamily. For this particular presentation, the stepfamily is the type needed. If you have been married, divorced, and remarried with an adolescent (12 to 19 yrs) living at home then you are encouraged to participate.

WHAT ARE THE DATES: SEPT. 8, 16, 22, 29, & OCT. 6.

LOCATION: REGION IX EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER

301 BEVERLY DRIVE (LOCP 11) WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS

TIME: 7:15 to 9:45 P.M.

APPENDIX D

TEST INSTRUCTIONS

<u># of Test</u>	<u>Test</u>	<u>Who Rates Whom</u>
<u>FAMILY GAME:</u>		
2.....	"Parent Self"...	Each Co-Parent evaluates themselves
4.....	"Parent Other"...	Each Parent evaluates their partner
		...Adolescent evaluates each co-parent

PARENT-ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

2.....	"Form P"...	Each parent rates the child
2.....	"Form A"...	The adolescent rates each parent

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

2.....	Each adult evaluates their marital relationship
--------	---

BEHAVIOR PROFILE INVENTORY

3.....	Each person rates their own personal stress level
--------	---

APPENDIX E

DA DENT I ARBIT Other

(INTERMEDIATE CHILD: NINE THROUGH FIFTEEN)

Developed by Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and John and Anna Donoghue

	SITUATION	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS
1	A son is not responding lately to the friendly way his parent has asked him to help around the house. The chores are not getting done and his room is a mess.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. direct and closely supervise the completion of the chores. B. in a pleasant and friendly manner continue to encourage his helping around the house. C. explain the situation to him and then make sure he completes his chores. D. not do anything, assuming that his behavior will improve.
2	A son is getting better in doing his homework each evening. His parent has been strict in checking to see that all his assigned work has been done. Reports from school show improvement.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. express satisfaction with his performance. Explain to him the importance of continuing to improve and monitor his work. B. since he has improved, let him do the work on his own. C. express approval and be available for help as needed. D. continue to direct and supervise his homework.
3	A daughter is unable to resolve a conflict with one of her friends. Her parent has normally not interfered in these situations. In the past the children have seemed to make such conflicts in stride and have worked out the problems themselves. This time this approach is not working.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. explain the problem to them and clarify their efforts in resolving the conflict. B. let them work it out for themselves as they have done in the past. C. solve the problem for them and tell them what to do. D. encourage the children to resolve the conflict and be supportive of their efforts.
4	This parent is considering allowing a daughter to rearrange her room. She has demonstrated responsibility around the house and is presently making good care of her room.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. participate with her in deciding about the rearrangement and be supportive of her efforts. B. decide what rearranging has to be done and then direct the completion of these changes. C. allow her to decide how she would like to alter her room. Let her do it on her own. D. explain to her how the room should be arranged and monitor the change.
5	A daughter's behavior has been deteriorating. She is being uncooperative and inconsiderate to family members. She has continually needed reminding of her household chores. "Laying down the law" has helped in the past.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. consider this a stage she is going through and not do anything. B. explain to her the effects of her behavior, see that she gets her chores done, and that she shows respect toward family members. C. act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect her behavior. D. sit down and discuss the situation with her and find out what she thinks ought to be done.
6	A parent has just returned from the hospital after recovering from an illness. During the parent's absence the family situation has been running smoothly. The other parent has been closely supervising the children. This parent wants to maintain good behavior, but wants to increase the children's role in taking responsibility.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. do what could be done to make them feel important and involved. B. continue with close supervision and guidance. C. let them direct their own behavior. D. explain to them the importance of assuming some responsibility, but check periodically that this is being accomplished.

	SITUATION	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS
7	Due to a parent's new job, work around the house needs to be shared in a different way. The children understand the problem and have made suggestions on how they could help. They have usually done well with their chores in the past.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. tell them what their new responsibilities are and then closely supervise their completion. B. participate with them in deciding new ways to share the expanding responsibilities and support their cooperative efforts. C. clarify the new situation and make sure that everyone is doing his or her share. D. just let the assuming of new responsibilities emerge.
8	Children in a family are behaving in responsible ways and get along well with each other and their parents. But this parent feels insecure about not supervising their activities.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. stop worrying about it and continue to leave them alone. B. decide what action to take and then explain the decision to them. C. take steps to direct and supervise their behavior. D. discuss the situation with them and attempt to reach an agreement on a plan of action.
9	A son has not done the fall cleanup that his parent asked him to do. He doesn't show up when scheduled but seems to be good at making excuses.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. let him set his own work schedule, assuming that he will eventually get around to it. B. explain the necessity for getting the work done and supervise the completion of the cleanup. C. direct and closely supervise him until the job is done. D. discuss the situation with him in a friendly manner.
10	A teenage daughter, who previously had been an excellent student, is beginning to flake and participate in after-school activities. Her schoolwork and chores are suffering. Her parent felt that she would take care of the problem but now after several weeks is quite concerned.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. discuss the problem with her and involve her in finding a solution. B. not intervene, assuming that she will resolve the problem and do something to correct it. C. restrict her activities and supervise the completion of her homework and chores around the house. D. explain the situation and clarify the necessity of balance between social activities and other responsibilities.
11	A son, usually able to take some responsibility for handling money, is not responding to a change in spending caused by the family's present financial setback.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. avoid confrontation by not saying anything about his spending, leave the situation alone, and assume it will all work out. B. discuss the problem with him and together work out a reasonable plan. C. restate the new limitations to him and then closely supervise his spending. D. explain the reasons for cutting back spending and clarify his role.
12	Children in a family seem to be upset with each other. Over the last several years they have gotten along together and, during that period, have done well in school and have taken responsibility at home. They have worked well together on family projects and have been able to settle any differences on their own.	<i>In this situation this parent would . . .</i> A. make a decision, explain it to them, and answer any questions they may have. B. not interfere, but wait to see if they work it out themselves. C. act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect. D. discuss the situation with them and be supportive.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING

Determining Parent Style and Flexibility

Figure 1 below will help you determine your perception of this parent's style and style flexibility. In the figure below circle the letter of the alternative action that you chose for each of the twelve situations. Total the number of circles directly above in each of the four subcolumns. The subcolumns 1 through 4 represent the number of times you felt this parent would use parent styles 1 (telling), 2 (selling), 3 (participating), and 4 (delegating).

Figure 1. Determining Parent Style and Style Flexibility

		ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS (Style Range)			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SITUATIONS	1	A	C	B	D
	2	D	A	C	B
	3	C	A	D	B
	4	B	D	A	C
	5	C	B	D	A
	6	B	D	A	C
	7	A	C	B	D
	8	C	B	D	A
	9	C	B	D	A
	10	B	D	A	C
	11	A	C	B	D
	12	C	A	D	B
Sub-columns		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
		Telling	Selling	Participating	Delegating

From the above figure, you may determine your perception of this parent's primary and secondary parent styles. *Primary parent style* is defined by the subcolumn(s) in which there are the most responses. The parent style(s) this parent tends to use on occasion, *secondary parent style*, is any one or more of the other subcolumns in which there are two or more responses. Style flexibility is determined by the number of subcolumns in which there are two or more choices. This includes both primary and secondary styles.

DA DENT I ALLEN Self

(INTERMEDIATE CHILD: NINE THROUGH FIFTEEN)

Developed by Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and John and Anna Donoghue

	SITUATION	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS
1	Your son is not responding lately to the friendly way in which you have asked him to help around the house. The chores are not getting done and his room is a mess.	A. Direct and closely supervise the completion of the chores. B. In a pleasant and friendly manner continue to encourage his helping around the house. C. Explain the situation to him and then make sure he completes his chores. D. Don't do anything; assume his behavior will improve.
2	Your daughter is getting better about doing her homework each evening. You have been strict in checking to see that all her assigned work has been done. Reports from school show improvement.	A. Express your satisfaction with her performance. Explain to her the importance of continuing to improve and monitor her work. B. Since she has improved, let her do the work on her own. C. Express your approval and be available for help as needed. D. Continue to direct and supervise her homework.
3	Your daughter is unable to resolve a conflict with one of her friends. You have normally not interfered in these situations. In the past they have seemed to take such conflicts in stride and have worked out the problems themselves. This time this approach is not working.	A. Explain the problem to them and clarify their efforts at resolving the problem. B. Let them work it out for themselves as they have done in the past. C. Solve the problem for them and tell them what to do. D. Encourage them to resolve the conflict and be supportive of their efforts.
4	You are considering allowing your son to rearrange his room. He has demonstrated responsibility around the house and he is presently taking good care of his room.	A. Participate with him in deciding about the rearrangement and be supportive of his efforts. B. Decide what rearranging has to be done and then direct the completion of these changes. C. Allow him to decide how he would like to alter his room. Let him do it on his own. D. Explain to him how the room should be arranged and monitor the change.
5	Your daughter's behavior has been deteriorating. She is being uncooperative and inconsiderate to family members. She has continually needed reminding of her household chores. "Laying down the law" has helped in the past.	A. Consider this a stage she is going through and don't do anything. B. Explain to her the effects of her behavior; see that she gets her chores done and shows respect toward family members. C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect her behavior. D. Sit down and discuss the situation with her and find out what she thinks ought to be done.
6	You have just returned from the hospital, where you have been recovering from an illness. During your absence the family situation has been running smoothly. Your spouse at home has been closely supervising the children. You want to maintain good behavior and you want to increase their role in taking responsibility.	A. Do what can be done to make them feel important and involved. B. Continue with close supervision and guidance. C. Let them direct their own behavior. D. Explain to them the importance of assuming some responsibility, but check periodically that this is being accomplished.

	SITUATION	ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS
7	Due to your new job, work around the house needs to be shared in a different way. Your children understand the problem and have made suggestions on how they could help. They have usually done well with their chores in the past.	A. Tell them what their new responsibilities are and then closely supervise their completion. B. Participate with them in deciding new ways to share the expanding responsibilities and support their cooperative efforts. C. Clarify the new situation and make sure that everyone is doing his or her share. D. Just let the assuming of new responsibilities emerge.
8	Your children are behaving in responsible ways and get along well with each other and you and your spouse, but you feel insecure about your lack of supervision of their activities.	A. Stop worrying about it and continue to leave them alone. B. Decide what action to take and then explain your decision to them. C. Take steps to direct and supervise their behavior. D. Discuss the situation with them and attempt to reach an agreement on a plan of action.
9	Your son has not done the fall cleanup that you asked him to do. He doesn't show up when scheduled but seems to be good at making excuses.	A. Let him set his own work schedule. He will eventually get around to it. B. Explain the necessity for getting the work done and supervise the completion of the cleanup. C. Direct and closely supervise him until the job is done. D. Discuss the situation with him in a friendly manner.
10	Your teenage daughter, who previously had been an excellent student, is beginning to dye and participate in after-school activities. Her schoolwork and chores are suffering. You felt that she would take care of the problem, but now after several weeks you are quite concerned.	A. Discuss the problem with her and involve her in finding a solution. B. Don't interfere. She will realize the problem and do something to correct it. C. Restrict her activities and supervise the completion of her homework and chores around the house. D. Explain the situation to her and clarify the necessary balance between social activities and other responsibilities.
11	Your son, usually able to take some responsibility for handling money, is not responding to a change in spending caused by the family's present financial setback.	A. Avoid confrontation by not saying anything about his spending; leave the situation alone and assume it will all work out. B. Discuss the problem with him and together work out a reasonable plan. C. Restore the new limitations to him and then closely supervise his spending. D. Explain the reasons for cutting back spending and clarify his role.
12	Your children seem to be upset with each other. Over the last several years they have gotten along together and during that period have done well in school and have taken responsibility at home. They have worked well together on family projects and have been able to settle any differences on their own.	A. Explain your decision to the children and answer any questions they may have. B. Don't interfere; wait to see if the children work it out themselves. C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect. D. Discuss the situation with your children and be supportive.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING In the figure below circle the letter of the alternative action that you chose for each of the twelve situations. Total the number of circles directly above in each of the four subcolumns. The subcolumns 1 through 4 represent the number of times you selected parent styles 1 (telling), 2 (selling), 3 (participating), and 4 (delegating).

Figure 1. Determining Parent Style and Style Flexibility

		ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS (Style Range)			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SITUATIONS	1	A	C	B	D
	2	D	A	C	B
	3	C	A	D	B
	4	B	D	A	C
	5	C	B	D	A
	6	B	D	A	C
	7	A	C	B	D
	8	C	B	D	A
	9	C	B	D	A
	10	B	D	A	C
	11	A	C	B	D
	12	C	A	D	B
Sub-columns		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
		Telling	Selling	Participating	Delegating

From the figure, you may determine your primary and secondary parent styles. Your *primary parent style* is defined by the subcolumn(s) in which you have the most responses. The parent style(s) you tend to use on occasion your *secondary parent style* is any one or more of the other subcolumns in which you have two or more responses. Style flexibility is determined by the number of subcolumns in which you had two or more choices. This includes both primary and secondary styles.

APPENDIX F

FORM A

PARENT-ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

Developed by
MILLARD J. BIENVENU, SR.

	YES usually	NO sometimes seldom		YES usually	NO sometimes seldom
1. Is family conversation easy and pleasant at meals?	—	—	27. Do you fail to ask your parents for things because you believe they will deny your requests?	—	—
2. Do your parents wait until you are through talking before "having their say"?	—	—	28. Does your mother criticize you too much?	—	—
3. Do you pretend you are listening to your parents when actually you have tuned them out?	—	—	29. Does your father really try to see your side of things?	—	—
4. Do you feel that your father lectures and preaches to you too much?	—	—	30. Do either of your parents allow you to get angry and blow off steam?	—	—
5. Does your family do things as a group?	—	—	31. Do either of your parents consider your opinion in making decisions which concern you?	—	—
6. Do your parents seem to respect your opinion?	—	—	32. Does your father criticize you too much?	—	—
7. Do they laugh at you or make fun of you?	—	—	33. Do you find your mother's tone of voice irritating?	—	—
8. Do you feel your mother wishes you were a different kind of person?	—	—	34. Do your parents try to make you feel better when you are "down in the dumps"?	—	—
9. Do either of your parents believe that you are bad?	—	—	35. Does your mother really try to see your side of things?	—	—
10. Does your family talk things over with each other?	—	—	36. Do you find your father's tone of voice irritating?	—	—
11. Do you discuss personal problems with your mother?	—	—	37. Do either of your parents explain their reason for not letting you do something?	—	—
12. Do you feel your father wishes you were a different kind of person?	—	—	38. Do you feel that your mother lectures and preaches to you too much?	—	—
13. Do your parents seem to talk to you as if you were much younger than you actually are?	—	—	39. Do you ask your parents about their reasons for decisions they make concerning you?	—	—
14. Do they show an interest in your interests and activities?	—	—	40. Do you find it hard to say what you feel at home?	—	—
15. Do you discuss personal problems with your father?	—	—		—	—
16. Does he pay you compliments or say nice things to you?	—	—		—	—
17. Do your parents ask your opinion in deciding how much spending money you should have?	—	—		—	—
18. Do you discuss matters of sex with either of your parents?	—	—		—	—
19. Do you feel that your father trusts you?	—	—		—	—
20. Do you help your parents understand you by saying how you think and feel?	—	—		—	—
21. Does your mother pay compliments or say nice things to you?	—	—		—	—
22. Does she have confidence in your abilities?	—	—		—	—
23. Are your parents sarcastic toward you?	—	—		—	—
24. Do you feel that your mother trusts you?	—	—		—	—
25. Does your father have confidence in your abilities?	—	—		—	—
26. Do you hesitate to disagree with either of your parents?	—	—		—	—

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PARENT-ADOLESCENT COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

Developed by

MILLARD J. BIENVENU, SR.

	YES usually	NO sometimes seldom	YES usually	NO sometimes seldom
1. Is family conversation easy and pleasant at mealtimes?	—	—	—	—
2. Do you wait until your son/daughter is through talking before "having your say"?	—	—	—	—
3. Do you pretend you are listening to him/her when actually you have tuned him/her out?	—	—	—	—
4. Does your spouse tend to lecture and preach too much to your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
5. Does your family do things as a group?	—	—	—	—
6. Does your son/daughter seem to respect your opinion?	—	—	—	—
7. Do you ever laugh at your son/daughter or make fun of him/her?	—	—	—	—
8. Do you wish your son/daughter were a different kind of person?	—	—	—	—
9. Do you feel that your son/daughter is bad?	—	—	—	—
10. Does your family talk things over with each other?	—	—	—	—
11. Does your son/daughter discuss personal problems with you?	—	—	—	—
12. Does your spouse wish your son/daughter were a different kind of person?	—	—	—	—
13. Does your son/daughter talk to you in a disrespectful manner?	—	—	—	—
14. Do you show an interest in your son's daughter's interests and activities?	—	—	—	—
15. Does your son/daughter discuss personal problems with your spouse?	—	—	—	—
16. Does your spouse pay your son/daughter compliments or say nice things to him/her?	—	—	—	—
17. Do you ask your son's daughter's opinion in deciding how much spending money he/she should have?	—	—	—	—
18. Do you discuss matters of sex with your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
19. Is it easy for your spouse to trust your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
20. Does your son/daughter help you to understand him/her by saying how he/she thinks and feels?	—	—	—	—
21. Do you pay compliments or say nice things to your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
22. Do you have confidence in his/her abilities?	—	—	—	—
23. Is your son/daughter sarcastic toward you?	—	—	—	—
24. Is it easy for you to trust your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
25. Does your spouse have confidence in your son's daughter's abilities?	—	—	—	—
26. When a difference arises are you and your son/daughter able to discuss it together (in a calm manner)?	—	—	—	—
27. Do you consider your son's daughter's ideas in making family decisions?	—	—	—	—
28. Do you criticize your son/daughter too much?	—	—	—	—
29. Does your spouse really try to see your son's daughter's side of things?	—	—	—	—
30. Do you allow your son/daughter to get angry and blow off steam?	—	—	—	—
31. Do you consider your son's daughter's opinion in making decisions which concern him/her?	—	—	—	—
32. Does your spouse criticize your son/daughter too much?	—	—	—	—
33. Do you find your son's daughter's voice irritating?	—	—	—	—
34. Do you try to make your son/daughter feel better when he/she is "down in the dumps"?	—	—	—	—
35. Do you really try to see your son's daughter's side of things?	—	—	—	—
36. Do you encourage your son/daughter to tell you his/her problems?	—	—	—	—
37. Does your son/daughter really try to see your side of things?	—	—	—	—
38. Do you tend to lecture and preach too much to your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—
39. Does your son/daughter accept your reasons for decisions you make concerning him/her?	—	—	—	—
40. Do you feel it hard to say what you feel in talking with your son/daughter?	—	—	—	—

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. Do you confide in your mate?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. Do you ever regret (that you married? or lived together?)	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate?	4	3	2	1	0
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	4	3	2	1	0

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Laugh together	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

	Yes	No
29. Being too tired for sex.	0	1
30. Not showing love.	0	1

31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

5	I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
4	I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
3	I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
2	It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
1	It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
0	My relationship can never succeed, and there is no mine that I can do to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX H

Behavior Profile

INSTRUCTIONS:

Indicate your level of agreement (How closely does each statement describe you?) with the following statements by putting the numbers 1 (one) to 5 (five) next to each statement as follows:

- 5 — strongly agree
 - 4 — agree
 - 3 — somewhat characteristic
 - 2 — disagree
 - 1 — strongly disagree
- 1. When I engage in a regular conversation with someone, I emphasize key words in my sentences to make sure that I get my point across.
 - 2. When I engage in a regular conversation with someone, I end my sentences very rapidly so I can quickly move on to express my other thoughts
 - 3. I walk very rapidly
 - 4. I eat very rapidly
 - 5. I move quickly when I'm writing at my desk or answering the telephone.
 - 6. Most people move too slowly for me.
 - 7. I get impatient when other people talk and I find myself finishing their sentences for them
 - 8. I get pretty irritated when I'm driving and the car in front of me is going too slow
 - 9. I get pretty irritated when I have to wait in line for anything like waiting in line to be seated at a restaurant.
 - 10. I get impatient when I have to watch other people do things that I know I can do faster (e.g., shopping for groceries).
 - 11. I get impatient with doing boring and repetitious things like writing checks, washing and cleaning dishes, and so forth.
 - 12. I don't read much outside of my own field unless it is in the form of a summary or condensation.
 - 13. I find myself thinking about two things at one time like listening to someone talk and thinking about what I have to do tomorrow
 - 14. I think about my work problems when I am involved in recreational activities such as golfing, tennis or at the movies

- 15. I do two things at a time like using my electric razor while eating breakfast or driving.
- 16. I am preoccupied with my own thoughts when I am listening to other people talk.
- 17. It is difficult for me to refrain from talking and bringing the conversation around to something that interests me.
- 18. I feel guilty when I take time off for a vacation.
- 19. I feel guilty when I take several hours off from work to just relax.
- 20. I don't notice the lovely things in my environment like paintings and plants.
- 21. I like to accumulate as many possessions as possible like several cars, tennis rackets, and so forth.
- 22. My daily schedule gets tighter and tighter all of the time because I want to do more in the same amount of time.
- 23. I would describe myself as an aggressive person, particularly around other people who are aggressive.
- 24. I would describe myself as a nervous person who has a lot of gestures and nervous habits like clenching my fist tightly and banging on the desk with a pencil.
- 25. I'm subject to nervous habits like clenching my jaw, grinding my teeth, and so forth.
- 26. One of the reasons for my success in life is the fact that I can get things done faster than most people.
- 27. I'm fond of numbers in evaluating my success like the number of dollars I earn, the number of presentations I've given, the number of tennis matches I've won, and the number of appointments I had in the last week.
- 28. I feel angry and hostile towards other people, particularly the ones that get in my way when I want to get something done.
- 29. I like to regularly tell people about my achievements or accomplishments.
- 30. I must be on top or superior at everything, even my recreational activities.

SCORING: Sum the scores of the thirty items to obtain the total score.

APPENDIX I

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Male _____ Female _____
2. Adult _____ Adolescent _____
3. Age _____
4. Education: Circle highest number of years you
have attended.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

5. Are you presently enrolled in college or a technical
training program? _____

6. On the following marriage-divorce chart, fill in the
number of years appropriate for you.

Married	divorced	married	divorced	married	divorced
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	yrs.	yrs.

7. How many times married _____ divorced _____

APPENDIX J

PROJECT FLET

FAMILIES LIVING EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER

RATIONALE

The results of the 1980 White House Conference on Families points toward the powerful influence that the American family has exerted on both the Federal and local governments. Much of the spending of tax dollars and many laws being formulated are lobbied by "pro-family" groups. Stinnett (1979), commenting on the influence that families have on individuals and nations, said,

"...There is evidence that many of our major problems in society such as juvenile delinquency are associated with negative, unsatisfying family life" (p. 1).

Many of the social problems would tend to be reduced if there emerged a strong satisfying family life within the American culture. The Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children concluded that "the prevention of serious emotional problems through the strengthening of the family life is of primary importance" (p. 1).

From an informal survey of families whose children had serious behavioral problems, it was discovered that a systematic procedure of family communication, discipline, and understanding the needs of each family member would help these families overcome their behavioral difficulties.

The experimental treatment procedures used in this manual are systematically arranged so that each person in the family will be able to achieve the optimum results by progressive step-by-step gradations of interpersonal growth.

By stepfamilies participating in such a program, it is hypothesized that the family will communicate with understanding; the stress will be reduced to a controllable level; and the family will experience a more harmonious relationship.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

The teaching model described in this manual was developed to provide a systematic approach for teaching five psychological concepts that enhance effective parenting. Table X lists the five psychological frames-of-reference that are used in FLET. These concepts provide the basis for believing that this approach provides people with the learning experiences which can increase their practical use of communication skills as outlined in FLET. Each psychological modality with its key concepts, key contribution, and desired goal is listed for easy reference. Each group session uses a combination of all these concepts in order to help the family member become skilled in family leadership and communication.

MANUAL FORMAT

The format used will first give an explanation of suggestions for facilitating project FLET and then an outline of the five group sessions. These outlines list materials, procedures, and suggested procedure for presenting the concepts and skills, followed by an explanation of activities used to help experientially teach the psychologi-

TABLE X
PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAME - OF - REFERENCE

IDEALITY ALTERNATIVE	KEY CONCEPTS	KEY CONTRIBUTION	DESIRED GOAL TO...
	"Man is a social being and will seek favor from peers."	Responsibility Natural Consequences Equality/Decision Making	Produce a social being capable of living in groups happily.
COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL ELLIS	"Man is capable of change."	A-B-C of Rational Living Behavior - Thinking - Feelings: Change the thinking and feelings change. Develop a plan of action, resolve secondary problems.	Produce happy, rational beings who are in control of themselves.
SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY	"All behavior is learned" and can be controlled.	S - R Reinforcement	Produce families that reinforce acceptable behavior to improve their relationships.
COMMUNICATION	This is "The key to all human interaction," verbal or nonverbal.	Double blind Hidden agenda Listening Homeostasis	Produce individuals that can avoid the pit falls of poor communications and develop the skills of straight talk.
CREATAL EXISTENTIAL - HUMANISTIC	"Man's striving for self actualization causes one to excel and care for things greater than just survival." It deals with "Here and Now"	Broader understanding of individuals Higher consciousness of acceptance of the person vs. behavior	Produce individuals that can conceptually develop a more calm, higher level of conscious relating to other people.
FAMILY SYSTEMS	"It is the whole system that has the need for change, not just a family member that is the scape goat."	Boundaries, Power, Rules, Coalition, and Triangulation vs. Alliances Differentiation of Self	Produce family units that can develop healthy interactional patterns.

cal concepts. A copy of each transparency that was used as a teaching guide makes up the fourth section.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FACILITATING FLET

There are four main activities that will be used throughout the five sessions: mini-lecture, group activities, discussion, and extended application. Each of these is discussed in the following paragraphs:

1. Mini-lecture.

Mini-lectures take between 20 and 30 minutes and are designed to present new ideas and information concerning the psychological frameworks and provide overviews for the small group discussion and practice.

2. Group Activities.

These activities or exercises are designed to provide the participant with experiences in using the frameworks, principles, and skills taught by either engaging in communication behavior or by observing and analyzing others' communication. Three kinds of exercises are included: (1) individual exercises in which a student participates alone, (2) pair exercises in which a student participates with a partner, and (3) small group exercises in which an individual participates with 3 to 5 other individuals. Only demonstrations and closure will involve the entire group or class.

Most of the learning exercises involve pairs performing some communication for a short time with a third person observing. This is followed by feedback, which is aimed at providing students with experiences in observing and analyzing communication, as well as seeing models of communication.

3. Discussion.

Discussions are designed to provide participants with an opportunity to share their ideas about the course content and experiences. These may be conducted in either the small groups or the total group and should motivate students to serve as resource people for each other.

4. Extended Application.

These assignments are given to the students in order that they may practice using their new skills in everyday living. Growth is not experienced until the assignments are practiced and become a natural part of the participant.

During the presentation of the five topics in Part I, there will be references to the activities in Part II. These activities will contain the following kinds of information:

1. Type of Activity.

This will indicate whether the activity is a

mini-lecture, exercise-activity, discussion, or extended application.

2. Approximate Time.

This will indicate how long the activity normally takes and is indicated as a range in minutes, e.g., 10 to 15 minutes.

3. Goals.

Specific goals for the activity are indicated and are stated in behavioral terms of having the participant learn to apply a framework, or practice one or more specific communication or parenting skills.

4. Unit of Activity.

This refers to the sub-divisions of the class that will be used in the activity: individual, pair, small group, or class. Some of the activities utilize several units as they proceed.

5. Materials.

Any special materials needed for the exercise will be indicated, i.e., overhead projector and transparencies, chalk board, sheets for diagramming, observation sheets, and etc.

6. Procedures.

The specific steps to be followed in conducting the activity will be detailed. If a discussion is part of an exercise, the instructor should

keep notes on things he sees happening during the exercise that may be emphasized to help students integrate their learning and reinforce certain behaviors.

7. Instructions.

This section will include additional procedural information, specific points to watch for during the activity, and specific questions to ask in processing the activity.

THE INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE

The major focus in this program is on skills development in the following areas: communication, discipline, parenting style, marital adjustment, and stress reduction.

The facilitator is not in a therapeutic situation but an educational one which encourages the participants to find alternate ways to handle their own specific problems. Facilitators are to model behavior, observe behavior, and give feedback. The key successful to the facilitating of an educational learning group is remembering the general objective of teaching skills; i.e., the participants have a contract to learn how to use the skills, and the facilitator has a contract not to be "seduced by content".

Interesting situations are brought up in group discussions; and there is a strong temptation to analyze in terms of motives, alternate ways to handle the situation, and what

you would do if you... These things tend to lead facilitating away from skill emphasis into therapeutic meddling.

1. Mini-lecture.

Use this when presenting psychological concepts. In this approach the lecture should be brief, and the facilitator should then move into an exercise which will provide an opportunity to demonstrate the concept.

2. Discussions.

Discussions should be kept short. The facilitator's role is to briefly summarize the main points of the exercise, at the same time reinforcing student's responsibility for learning. The student himself should be required to make his own observations.

3. Illustration of the psychological concept.

It is best when presenting a concept to demonstrate or model the skills involved. One should not only talk about them but should show how they work. If the presentation is more of a content oriented framework, examples should be given from the facilitator's own life to illustrate the point.

4. Avoidance of power struggles and arguments.

Sometimes participants will want to argue about a frame-of-reference or about a skill.

One should not argue; instead, he should simply indicate that some people find them useful, but others do not; then he should go on.

GROUP LEADERSHIP

When leading a group that has as its primary purpose the learning of skills, the leader will want to develop smooth transitions from one skill to another. This can be done by providing a brief summary of what has been done so far and what the group will do next. The giving of instruction is a most important part of the process.

The best time to process instructions is when setting up new exercises. Once again, the instructions need to be kept brief. The group should be taken through the exercise step by step, giving them ideas to observe and learn.

MODELING BEHAVIOR

The group leader is in the role of model during this total program. Specifically, there are times when the modeling role is particularly evident: (1) during demonstrations, (2) during feedback parts of an exercise, and (3) when answering questions.

When demonstrating the skills, they must be kept in the context of reality. Issues are chosen that will be real to the students, so they can see how these concepts and skills can be used in their lives.

During the feedback part of an exercise, process statements are used. When using process statements, one is

documenting the use of the skill. Example: "I heard you make a feeling statement when you said..."Keep students talking to each other, not about someone in the class".

PART I: GROUP SESSIONS OUTLINE

Session 1

- 1-1.1 Opening Mini-Lecture - Listening Skills (30 min.)
 - 1.2 To present an explanation of
 - 1.3 Non-verbal language (5 min.)
 - 2.3 Reflective listening (15 min.)
 - 3.3 I-U messages (10 min.)
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Transparency #1 & 2 (Reflective listening & I-U messages)
 - 3.2 Procedures/activities for mini-lecture presentation
 - 1.3 Non-verbal introduction (group participation)
 - 2.3 Presentation of transparency #1
 - 3.3 Role play of effective reflective listening
 - 4.3 Presentation of transparency #2
 - 5.3 Role play of positive vs. negative I-U messages
 - 6.3 Closure

- 1-2.1 1st group session (45 min.)
 - 1.2 To help each person use the following skills effectively
 - 1.3 Non-verbal language
 - 2.3 Reflective listening
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Observation sheet #1
 - 2.3 Handout sheet #1 (copies of transparency #1)
 - 3.2 Procedures/activities for experiencing listening skills
 - 1.3 "Sender-receiver-observer", (activity)
 - 2.3 Role play of reflective listening skills Break (15 min.)
- 1-3.1 Second group session (45 Min.)
 - 1.2 To help each person effectively send "I-U" messages
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Handout #2
 - 3.2 Procedures/activities for experiencing I-U messages
 - 1.3 "sender-receiver-observer" activity
 - 2.3 "sender-receiver-observer": combination activity for reflective listening & I-U messages

- 1-4.1 Closure - group assembly (15 min.)
 - 1.2 To gain closure by giving a demonstration of how the three listening skills are used as one
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Two volunteers for role play
 - 2.3 Procedure: Volunteers' role play of the three reflective listening skills
 - 3.3 Giving of extended assignment. (#1)
 - 1.4 To help each family assimilate reflective listening into daily living

Session II

- 2-1.1 Opening mini-lecture, Barricades to Communication (30 min.)
 - 1.2 To present new ideas
 - 1.3 Reviewing Session I
 - 2.3 Ways to barricade effective communication
 - 3.3 Utilizing feedback in communication
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Transparencies
 - 1.4 I-U messages (#2)
 - 2.4 Family communication (#3)
 - 3.4 Feedback (#4)

3.2 Procedures/activities for mini-lecture

- 1.3 Use transparencies as basic outline for lecture presentation of new information. The material will be developed in the group session.

2-2.1 1st Group session (45 min.)

1.2 To help each person develop efficiency

- 1.3 In using listening skills (lesson #1)
- 2.3 In overcoming barricades to communication
- 3.3 In using "straight talk"

2.2 Materials needed

- 1.3 A handout copy of transparency #3 used in mini-lecture

3.2 Procedure/activities for experiencing communication skills

- 1.3 Dividing of groups into dyads for practice
- 1.4 Reflective listening
- 2.4 Sending of positive I-U messages
- 3.4 Blocking of I-U messages
- 4.4 Correcting of blocked messages

Break (15 min.)

2-3.1 2nd Group Session (45 min.)

- 1.2 To help each person use feedback as an effective communication skill

2.2 Materials needed

A handout copy of transparency #4

3.2 Procedures/activities for experiencing communication skills

1.3 Division of groups into dyads for practice

1.4 Reflective listening skills with feedback

2-4.1 Closure - Group Assembly (15 min.)

1.2 To gain closure by demonstrating the effective use of blocking communication, overcoming road blocks, and feedback as used in family communication patterns.

Session III

3-1.1 Opening mini-lecture: "Accepting Responsibility" (30 min.)

1.2 Presenting new ideas:

1.3 Review of previous skills

1.4 Reflective listening

2.4 Sending of straight messages

3.4 Overcoming of communication barricades

4.4 Feedback

2.3 Removal of barriers to discipline

3.3 Acceptance of personal responsibility

2.2 Materials needed

1.3 Transparencies

1.4 Removal of barriers to discipline (#5)

2.4 Responsibility: ownership of behavior (#6)

3.3 Procedure/activity for mini-lecture

1.3 Use of transparencies as basic outline for lecture presentation of new information. The material will be developed in the group sessions.

3-2.1 First Group Session (45 min.)

1.2 To help each person develop efficiency in the following:

1.3 Use of listening skills

2.3 Sending of straight messages

3.3 Overcoming of communication barriers

4.3 Use of feedback

5.3 Removal of barriers to discipline

2.2 Materials needed

1.3 Handout copy of transparency #5

3.2 Procedure/activity for experiencing the above skills.

1.3 Two or three small groups using a group leader. Allow members to practice all the above skills.

- 2.3 Group discussion of what type of discipline takes place at home. Identify any barriers, suggest ideas to overcome them.

Break (15 min.)

3-3.1 Second Session

- 1.2 To help each person develop efficiency in identifying and accepting ownership of personal behavior
- 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Copy of transparency #6
- 3.2 Procedure/activities for experiencing responsibility
 - 1.3 Division into 2 or 3 small groups
Discuss: Responsibility and consequences, responsibility and discipline, responsibility and consistency. (why, what, when, where, how, and how often)

3-4.1 Closure - group assembly (15 min.)

- 1.2 To gain closure by demonstrating the effective removal of discipline barriers and responsibility for behavior
- 1.3 Role play by a family (contrived - not real family members)

- 1.4 Showing of a dysfunctional family with irresponsible members vs. a responsible family taking positive disciplinary action

Session IV

- 4-1.1 Opening mini-lectures: "Understanding Behavioral Motives" (30 min.)

- 1.2 Presenting new ideas

- 1.3 Review of barriers to discipline and acceptance of personal responsibility

- 2.3 Understanding of child's motives for his behavior.

- 3.3 Understanding of family power struggles

- 2.2 Materials needed

- 1.3 Transparencies

- 1.4 #5 & 6 for review

- 2.4 #7 Identifying of goals for children's misbehavior

- 3.4 #8 Skills for effective discipline

- 3.2 Procedure/activity for mini-lecture

- 1.3 Use of each transparency as a guide for presenting this material. The group sessions will develop the concepts.

- 4-2.1 First Group Session (45 min.)

- 1.2 To help each person develop efficiency in

- 1.3 Identifying of barriers to discipline

- 2.3 Acceptance of personal responsibility
- 3.3 Understanding of how children's misdirected goals result in disruptive behavior
- 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Copies of transparency #7
- 3.2 Procedure/activities for experiencing the parenting skill of redirecting children's goals and responsibility by
 - 1.3 Small group discussion, questions about the mini-lecture
 - 2.3 Role playing of the redirection of child's misdirected goals, overcoming of disruptive behavior

Break (15 min.)

- 4-3.1 Second group session
 - 1.2 To help each person:
 - 1.3 To develop efficiency in identifying and reducing power struggles
 - 2.3 To develop alternatives for conflict resolution
 - 3.3 To understand how to draw boundaries in family relations
 - 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Copies of transparency #8

- 3.2 Procedure/activity for experiencing alternatives to family conflicts
 - 1.3 Discussion in small groups of the skills for effective parenting
 - 2.3 Allowing of group to identify and develop each of the skills
 - 3.3 In dyads role play of identifying and performing of each of the skills
- 4-4.1 Closure - group assembly (15 min.)
 - 1.2 To gain closure by demonstrating a family using the concepts learned in this session.
 - 1.3 Identifying of the mistaken goal associated with the disruptive behavior
 - 2.3 Use of the appropriate skill or skills for effective parenting

Session V

- 5-1.1 Opening mini-lecture: "Discipline in an Open Family"
 - 1.2 Presentation of new ideas
 - 1.3 Review concepts and procedures for effective discipline
 - 1.4 Goals of children's misbehavior
 - 2.4 Seven skills for effective parenting
 - 2.3 Open vs closed parenting styles

2.2 Material needed

1.3 Copies of transparencies

1.4 #7 & 8 for review

2.4 #9 Parenting style: open & closed

3.4 #10 Parenting style with child's maturity

3.2 Procedures/activities for mini-lecture

1.3 Use of each transparency as a guide in presenting the material. The group sessions will develop the concepts

5-2.1 First group session

1.2 To help each person develop efficiency

1.3 In identifying the goals of children's misbehavior

2.3 In choosing the appropriate discipline procedure in helping the child change the inappropriate goal and resultant behavior

3.3 In understanding and functioning more frequently as an open family than as as closed family

2.2 Material needed

1.3 Handouts of transparencies #7, 8, 9, and 10

3.2 Procedure and activity for experiencing those parenting skills

- 1.3 In small groups, role play using each parenting leadership skill
- 1.4 Logical and natural consequences for behavior
- 2.4 Contingency contracting
- 2.3 In small groups, check out each person's understanding of how to use each of the seven leadership skills
- 3.3 In small groups, evaluate the group's ability to determine if their families are closed or open and how to change the family members from one position to another

Break (15 min.)

5-3.1 Second group session

- 1.2 To help each person get closure on any of the concepts or activities taught in the five sessions
- 2.2 Materials needed
 - 1.3 Each person has a copy of all the hand-outs and their notes taken during the sessions
- 3.2 Procedure/activity for experiencing this closure
 - 1.3 In small groups, encourage each person to ask questions, role play, give feed-

and/or respond to any specific concept taught. Encourage group discussion of all responses.

5-4.1 Closure general assembly

1.2 To gain closure by encouraging oral evaluation of each session and the overall project

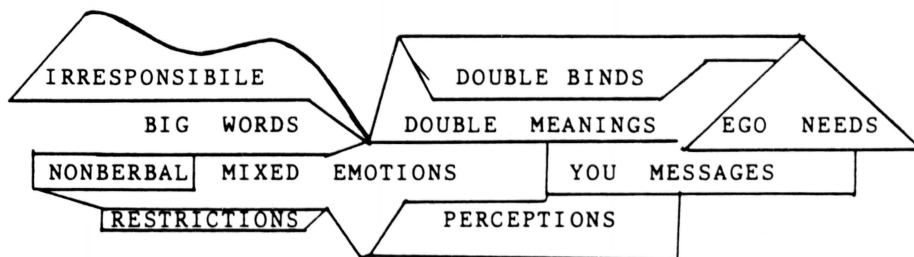
PART II: TRANSPARENCIES

TABLE OF TRANSPARIENCIES

1. I-U Messages
2. Reflective Listening
3. Family Communication Network
4. Communication Feedback
5. Removing Barriers to Discipline
6. Responsibility: Ownership of Behavior
7. Identifying Goals of Children's Misbehavior
8. Skills for Effective Leadership (Discipline)
9. Parenting Styles: Open & Closed
10. Parenting Styles: Maturity

Transparency #1

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



I SEND

YOU RECEIVE

"I like you"

"That's nice, Thanks"

"You help me feel
good about me"

"I wanted to share with you"

"You really look fat
today, what happened"

"Nothing that you could
understand."

"Is this the best you can
do? I'm disappointed with."

"You don't even need to finish..."

F E E D B A C K

Transparency #2

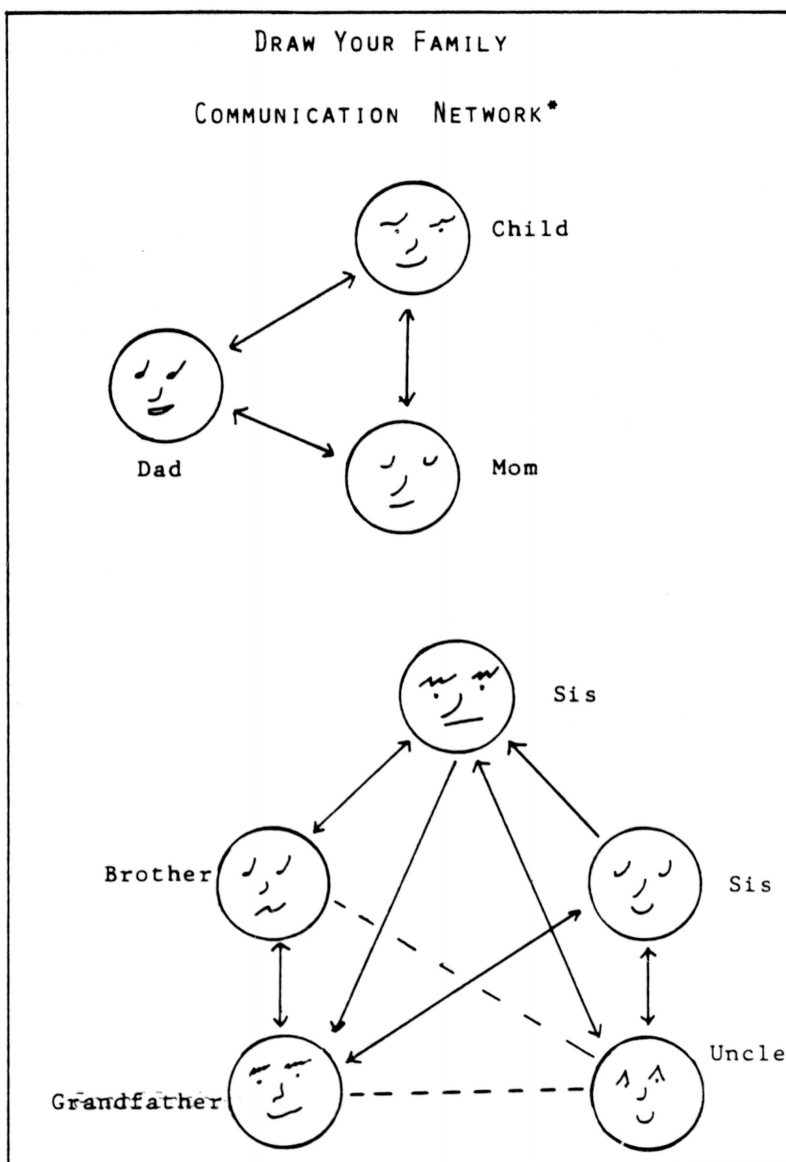
REFLECTIVE LISTENING

<u>THE MESSAGE ACTUALLY SENT</u>	<u>REFLECTIVE</u>	<u>RESPONSIVE</u>
1. I'm Never Going Home Again!		
2. No one likes me.		
3. I Just Can't Tell My Parents. They'd kill me.		
4. Why do adults always fight?		
5. Are all wives like this?		
6. My husband does every thing just right		
7. You should go to my church.		
8. Leave me alone, I don't need you.		
9. There's nothing to live for.		
10. I'm tired and rushed. I need your help.		
11. I'm tired and you aren't helping at all.		
12. You're selfish and inconsiderate.		
13. You are finally beginning to remember your chores.		
14. I enjoy seeing your room so neat & clean.		

Instructions:

1. In the reflective column state a possible feeling message that could have been sent.
2. In the responsive column state a possible response to the feeling message. (remember: feelings not content)
3. Suggested "Crutches" for developing the skill of reflective listening. Use the following sentence starters.
 1. "You feel..."
 2. "Sounds like you..."
 3. "Could you be..."
 4. "I wonder if you..."

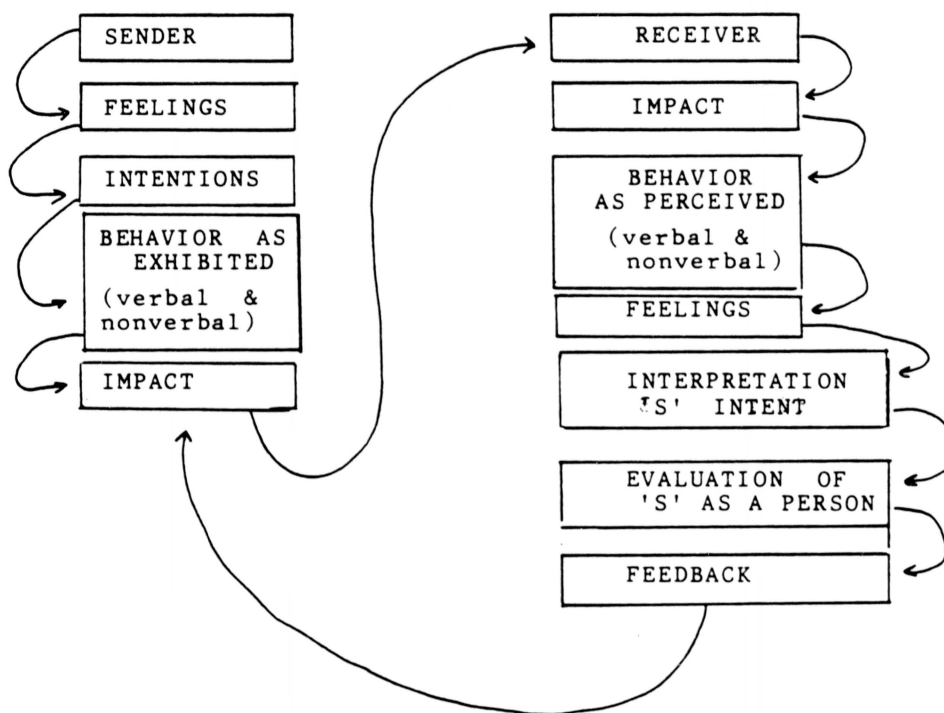
Transparency #3



*Adapted from Virginia Satir, Peoplemaking. Palo Alto, Ca.: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1972 (pp.141-150).

Transparency #4

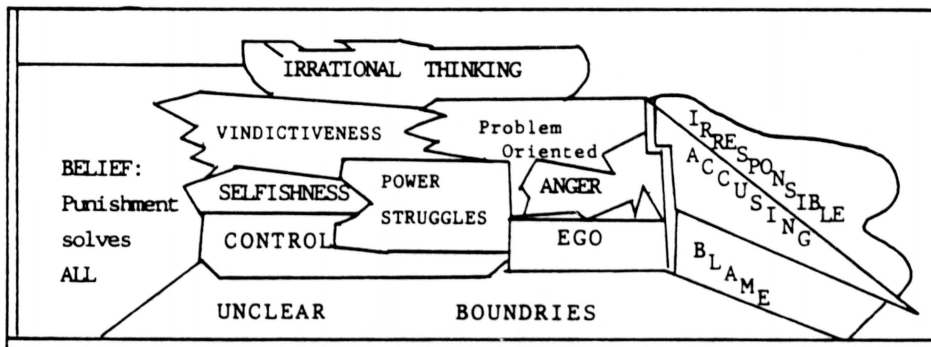
FUNCTION OF COMMUNICATION & FEEDBACK*



*Adapted from Elliot Aronson, The Social Animal. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, Co., 1980 (p.285).

Transparency #5

REMOVING BARRIERS TO DISCIPLINE



OBJECTIVES: DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL FAMILY DISCIPLINE

1. To be more accepting of individual differences
2. To develop skills in negotiating Alternatives
3. To develop and use Rational Thinking skills
4. To avoid blaming, accusing, judgmental & critical statements
5. To approach each situation as an opportunity for closeness and growth, not just a problem
6. To develop skills in negotiating Contingency Contracts
7. To develop skills in using Logical and Natural Consequences for all behavior
8. To develop skills in accepting Parential Power, developing acceptable boundries, and delegating limited power/responsibility to children
9. To develop skills in experientially teaching responsibility

DEFINITION: DISCIPLINE IS

1. Self-control, a rule or system of rules governing conduct or activity
2. Training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties

Transparency #6

RESPONSIBILITY: OWNERSHIP OF BEHAVIOR



EXPERIENTIAL EXPLORATION (Initiating Process) ► UNDERSTANDING ► ACTION

In order to understand her world the learner must have explored her experience of the world.

In this regard, the phases of learning are recycled
The feedback from action behavior stimulates further exploration which facilitates more accurate understanding and, ultimately, more effective action or improved outcome. *

*Robert Carkhuff & Bernard Berenson, Teaching As Treatment.
Amherst, Ma.: Human Resource Development Press, 1976
(p.144).

Transparency #7

IDENTIFYING GOALS OF CHILDREN'S MISBEHAVIOR

16

Useful Behavior		Useless Behavior		Direction of Maladjustment
Active-Constructive	Passive-Constructive	Active-Destructive	Passive-Destructive	GOALS
success The "model" child, "teacher's pet," and so on	charm The "cute" child (admired for what they are, not what they do)	The "nuisance," showoff, tattler, pest	shyness, dependency, timidity, functional reading prob. & speech dif.	AGM (1) Attention Getting Mechanism
Ordinarily, the child will attempt to achieve the more constructive goal first and will only progress to the more destructive behavior if he feels he is not achieving this goal. These sequences are only attempted by a child when less destructive behavior fails.		The "rebel" (disobedient, subject to temper tantrums, lying, types of sex behaviors may be AGM, also)	stubbornness (bed-wetting may also be AGM or revenge)	Power Seeking (2)
		The "vicious" child (frequently found stealing, bullying, being violent)	violent passivity (negativism)	Revenge Seeking (3)
			hopelessness (inaptitude, withdrawal giving up)	Assumed Disability (4)

Table 1 THE FOUR MAJOR GOALS OF CHILDHOOD MISBEHAVIOR

Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom

Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper.
 Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom
 New York: Harper & Row, 1971 (p.16).

Social
Discouragement

Transparency #8

SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING

1. Rational Thinking vs. Irrational Thinking
2. Identifying Family Boundaries for Behavior
3. Identifying Goals of Children's Misbehavior
4. Shifting Personal Responsibility (Reduction of Power Struggle)
5. Logical and Natural Consequences for Behavior
6. Negotiating a Contingency Contract
7. Conflict Resolution: (All the Above)
 1. Brainstorming involving children
 2. Family Council

Transparency #9

PARENTING STYLE; CLOSED & OPEN

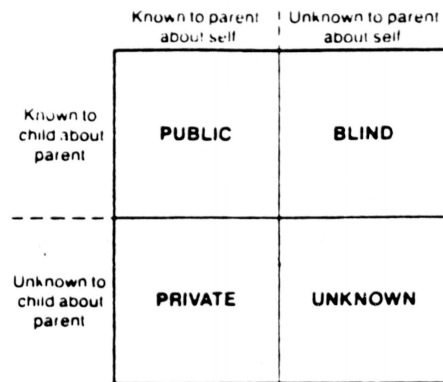


Figure 1. The Johari Window as applied to a parent-child relationship. *

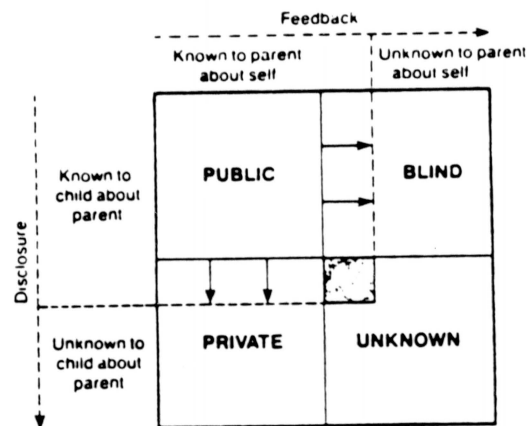


Figure 2. Effect of feedback and disclosure on the Johari Window.*

*Paul Hersey & Kenneth Blanchard, *The Family Game*. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1978(pp.169-170).

Transparency #10

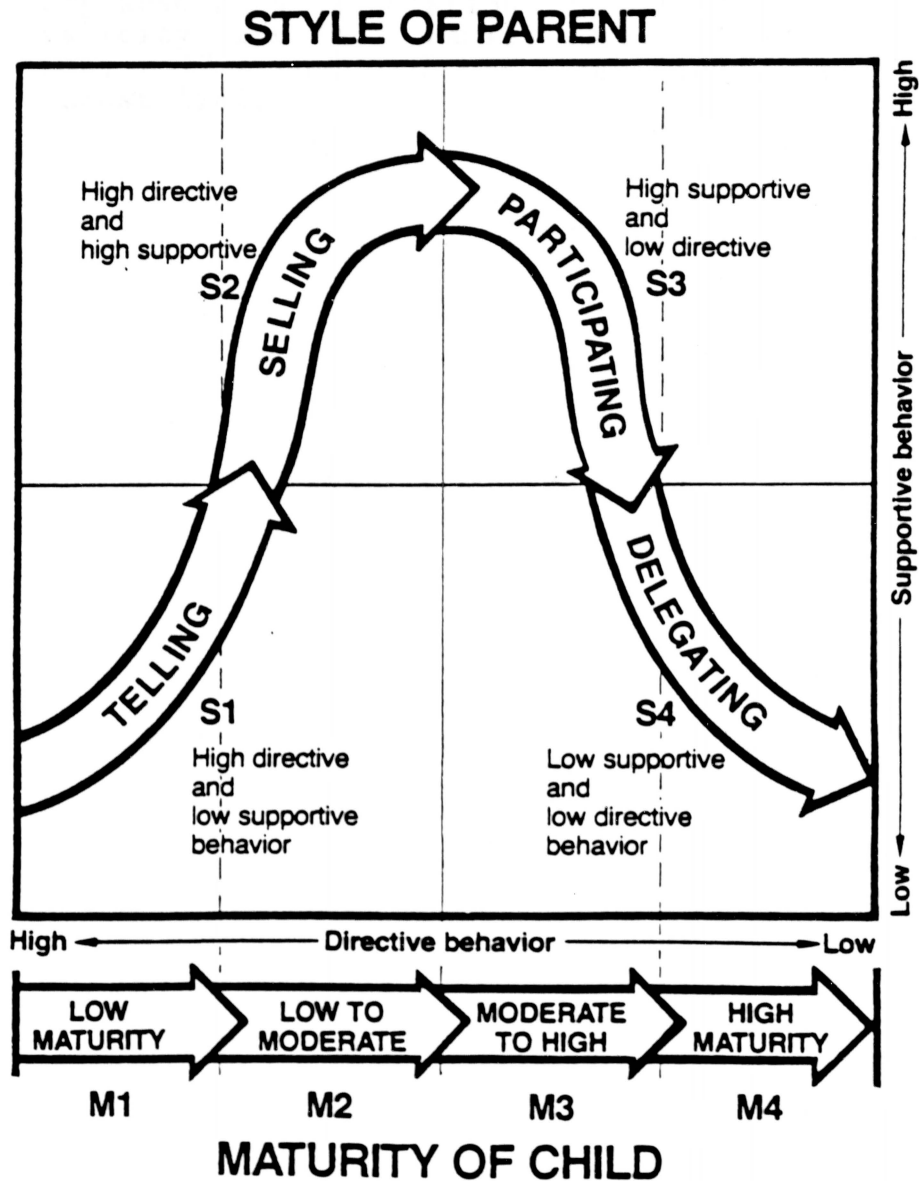


Figure 2, p. 27, from *The Family's Game: A Situational Approach to Effective Parenting* by Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard. © 1978 by Center for Leadership Studies.

When the maturity level of a child increases in a particular area, the style of the parent should shift to the right, along the curve in the Situational Leadership model.

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2. Learning Resources Corporation. Reliability and validity for the Family Game. Non available. LRC, 8517 Production Ave., San Diego, CA. 92121. August 1981.

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