



## Giant Step Facilitator Training

Monday, Oct. 16, 2017

4:00 – 6:00 pm Refreshments Provided

Wayne State University

The Freer House (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hoobler Room)

71 E. Ferry Street, Detroit, MI 48202

### Traits Needed in a Giant Step Facilitator:

- Ability to attend the required training session from 4:00 – 6:00 pm on October 16, 2017.
- Ability to arrive at Wayne State's Student Center Ballroom (5221 Gullen Mall, Detroit 48202) by 8:00 am on Oct. 24, 2017.
- Experience teaching, counseling, facilitating or otherwise working with teens is extremely helpful.
- Good self-confidence, presence and demeanor; be a positive adult role model for teens
- Respect for and enjoyment of teenagers, especially ninth and tenth graders
- Willingness to listen and learn new skills
- Willingness to resist interjecting one's own thoughts and values during discussion time
- Willingness to follow the Giant Step Teen Conference guidelines for facilitating
- Strong support of this conference and a belief in its mission

### Your Role as a Facilitator:

- Be a facilitator not a counselor.
- Keep the level of discussion on ideas.
- Encourage the group to take charge. Let the natural group process emerge from student sharing.
- Let the group develop its own agenda or values within the discussion topics. Avoid imposing your agenda or values. (Share values vs. imposing them.)
- Remember the goal of the conference is for teens to share feelings with **one another** – not necessarily with the facilitator.
- Encourage/allow each person the right to her/his own feelings.
- Encourage sharing only information that is comfortable to share.
- Keep the focus on the group -- not on yourself.
- Stress confidentiality. Everyone promises not to share information outside the group.
- Avoid patronizing language (I know it and you don't).
- Watch body language, i.e., read the unspoken messages, such as clenched fists (anger), moving chairs away or getting up to leave (distancing themselves from the subject, etc.). You may want/need to point out the unspoken responses to discussion, if participation seems to be suffering as a result.
- Avoid closed ended statements: "Well, that's your opinion."
- Focus positively rather than negatively, e.g., "You are all thinking very hard," rather than, "You are all stuck/uncomfortable/and nobody is talking."

## Possible Discussion Prompts for Facilitators

How do you handle conflict?

Tell us about your neighborhood.

What's the most difficult situation you've ever faced?

What does it mean to be a friend?

Do you feel like you fit in?

Have you ever felt bullied? What did you do? What did your friends do?

What's your greatest accomplishment?

Have you ever felt discriminated against?

If you could change anything, what would it be?

What do you want your life to be like in 5 years, or 10?

### What to Do if:

- **Only a few people talk:** Solicit comments from others on how to solve a problem that has been brought up.
- **Somebody sounds suicidal:** Refocus or redirect to the group, e.g., "How do the rest of you cope with this problem?" Make sure to tell the school counselor about the student's comments (get student's name and school). This is not a breach of confidentiality when a life is at risk.
- **Somebody says, "You're not hearing me!"** Reframe or rephrase the statement: "You all have times when you feel adults don't listen—how do you cope with that?"
- **The "discussion hog"** (talks a lot or changes the subject often). Interrupt when the "hog" takes a breath and redirect the discussion to the group. "Thank you for sharing, how do others cope with this issue?"
- **There is a very troubled group member.** Redirect discussion away from the troubled person in a positive way, but let the student's school counselor know about the behavior you saw. ("Thank you for sharing, how do the rest of you cope with that?") Again get the name of the student and their school.
- **Nobody talks.** Say, "Seems like everyone is thinking very hard—would you share some of your thoughts?"

## Tips for Facilitating Teen Discussion

### Preventing Problems

- ✓ At the start of conference
  - Get agreement on desired outcomes and agenda
  - Get agreement on roles
  - Establish ground rules
  - Be positive – encourage participation
  
- ✓ During conference
  - Make a suggestion as to how the group should proceed (a process suggestion)
  - Get agreement on how the group will proceed (a process suggestion)
  - Educate the group (process commercials)
  - Listen as an ally.
  - Ask open-ended questions.
  
- ✓ Sample ground rules
  - We're all colleagues—let's respect each other
  - It's OK to disagree
  - Listen as an ally
  - Be true to yourself and your values
  - Honor time limits

### Listening

- ✓ Typical listener response
  - Advise
  - Evaluate
  - Interpret
  - Ask close-ended questions
  
- ✓ Practice active listening by
  - Legitimizing—listen as an ally vs. adversary
  - Paraphrasing
  - Ask open-ended questions
  
- ✓ Key points
  - Check for understanding vs. agreement/disagreement
  - Get more information, and more accurate information

### THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

An open-ended question has no “one right answer.” It is hard to answer with only one or two words. It invites an explanation or discussion. It usually begins with words like: What? How? Why?

Some sentences serve as open-ended questions, even though they have no question mark. They also invite an explanation. They usually begin with phrases like: "Tell me..." "Describe..." "Explain..." or, "Say more about that."

### **Why is it Important?**

Open-ended questions are a very useful tool in getting participation. They seek general information and are useful for discovering new ideas or information, and exploring them. They are particularly important in asking for opinions, ideas, and feelings, since these usually require some explaining to make sense.

### **Examples**

"What do you think we should do?"  
"How do you feel about the way things are going?"  
"Explain how calls are handled in your area."  
"Describe the situation as you see it."  
"Say more about your idea to tracking errors."  
"Tell me how the accident happened."

## **THE CLOSED-ENDED QUESTION**

A closed-ended question often has one right answer. It is easily answered by "yes," "no," or a one or two word statement of fact. It does not invite discussion. It usually begins with words like: Who? When? How Much or How Many? Or it can start with: Did you? Will he? Can they? Should we? etc.

### **Why is it important?**

Closed-ended questions seek specific information. They are useful for supplying the group with facts, and "filling in the blanks" when specific data is missing. This kind of question is chiefly concerned with facts; it's not very useful for asking about opinion, ideas or feelings. A closed-ended question can be used to narrow the focus of a speaker's responses.

### **Examples**

"When must this be completed?"  
"How many items per hour are we averaging?"  
"Did you see it happen?"  
"Can he get one for us?"  
"Will you bring some to the next meeting?"

## **“LOADED” QUESTIONS**

Avoid using “loaded” questions. A “loaded” question is one that appears to ask for the other person’s input, but is actually set up for only one response. Since the desired answer is already contained in the question, we say it is “loaded.” It often begins with phrases like “Don’t you think that...” or “Wouldn’t you agree...”

Other forms of loaded questions are:

“Why don’t you . . .”

“What’s the matter with my way?”

“How could you say something like that?”

“How do you expect . . .?”

### **Why is it important?**

Loaded questions can destroy participation. They make people feel they are being manipulated because the question appears to be open, when it actually isn’t. People feel trapped and coerced when they have to answer a loaded question. This breaks down trust, especially if the group leader uses one.

Yet most of us are pretty handy at using them, because they have the temporary effect of making things seem to go more smoothly...“our way.”

When questions are set up so people can’t air their opinions openly, opposition goes “underground.” People start thinking they need allies to help get their ideas across, and start forming coalitions within the group. Others go along to be polite, then get apathetic because they believe their ideas don’t count and won’t be used.

Don’t treat “loaded” questions as a moral failing -- they aren’t. Most of us use them at times. Just watch out for them.

### **Examples**

“Wouldn’t you agree that we can all live with this solution?”

“How can you say that the plan isn’t working?”

“Why don’t you do it this way?”

“How do you expect an idea like that to work?”

## **NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR**

Non-verbal behavior is very powerful in both encouraging a speaker to say more, and in focusing both speaker and listener on the topic of discussion. Some key behaviors are:

### **Body**

Turn toward (sometimes lean toward) the speaker

Body upright, but not tense, arms and hands open (not crossed or clenched).

Little physical activity other than listening or possible note-taking.

Nodding occasionally.

### **Face**

Interested, alert expression on face.

Changes of expression correlate with what is being said (smile, raised eyebrows, frown, etc.).

### **Eyes**

Eyes focus on speaker.

Frequent eye contact.

### **Why is it Important?**

Non-verbal behavior is often unconscious and interpreted unconsciously by the viewer. This makes it powerful; it touches us on an instinctive level.

When a listener uses non-verbal behavior that indicates listening, the speaker feels listened to, valued and respected, and is encouraged to go on contributing. Both the listener and the speaker find it easier to concentrate on the topic being discussed.

When a listener uses non-verbal behavior that indicates non-listening, the speaker feels ignored, slighted, and foolish, and is discouraged from contributing further. The listener finds it hard to concentrate on what is being said, and hard to remember it later. The speaker loses concentration on the topic and starts wandering from the point in hopes of finding something to regain the speaker's interest.