

Session 4: Attachment and Bonding - Influence of one's parents



4.0: Introduction

Participants	Women and Men separately
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To reflect upon the influence that parents (fathers/ mothers) have had on the participants while they were growing up.2. To discuss how participants can build on their parents' positive influence, and avoid repeating the negative influences.
Duration	2 hours
Preparation	Review advance information about participants; revise/ expand questions accordingly.

Activity 4.1: Review of home Practice

Time | 20 minutes

Materials | Flipchart, markers and masking tape.

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- 1 | Welcome everyone for session four.
- 2 | Review home practice by asking individuals to share their experience (*Encourage them to discuss benefits and challenges of promoting child – parent (caregiver) interaction through play*).
- 3 | If participants had problems, ask others to suggest ways that these might be overcome.
- 4 | Encourage all the participants to continue doing the home practice.

Activity 4.2: Family Respectability

Time | 20 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know!

- a) Respect from children can best be attained by showing love, kindness, laying down clear rules of behaviour, and holding your children accountable for their actions/ behaviour. Respect is earned by giving respect.
- b) As children grow especially teenagers, they learn to solve problems with the possible consequences in mind. Parents therefore need to provide an environment that enables this.
- c) Parents should learn to communicate clear expectations and limits, and to keep their anger in check while communicating their disappointments.
- d) Parents need to know that exerting power to achieve what you demand from the child may bring about conflict.
- e) It is important to give an example or role play where the parent maintain their position as parents while using positive discipline.
- f) You can have an example or role play for children below 7 years and those between 10 - 15 years.

Objective | To reflect upon the family respect and its benefits to all the individuals of the family and community

Materials | Flipchart, masking tape and markers

STEPS

- 1** | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.
- 2** | **Ask** participants to take a minute and reflect upon a moment they were respected as children.
- 3** | **Give 2 – 3 people** an opportunity to share how they were respected and how it made them feel.
- 4** | **Ask** participants to take a minute and reflect upon a moment they were disrespected as children
- 5** | **Give 2 – 3 people** an opportunity to share how they were disrespected and how it made them feel?
- 6** | **Ask** participants to take a minute and reflect upon a moment they were respected as parents
- 7** | **Invite** participants to discuss the following:
 - a) What are some of the ways we can respect our children?
 - b) What are some of the ways we can respect our partners?
 - c) What are some of the ways we can respect members of the family?
(Write these on the flip chart).

Close the activity by highlighting some of the points as necessary;

- 1. Respect from children can best be attained by showing love, kindness, laying down clear rules of behaviour, and holding your children accountable for their actions/ behaviour. Respect is earned by giving respect.*
- 2. Parents should learn to communicate clear expectations and limits, and to keep their anger in check while communicating their disappointments.*
- 3. Parents need to know that exerting power to achieve what you demand from the child may bring about conflict.*

Activity 4.3: My Father/ Mother's Legacy

Time | 50 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know!

- a) Create an atmosphere that is comfortable and ideal for participants to share personal, emotional and intimate details.
- b) Remind the participants of the confidentiality commitment so that whatever is shared during the session stays in the session.
- c) For those who share difficult experiences, acknowledge and commend the fact that they were able to press on and continue with their lives despite facing such challenges.
- d) If a participant breaks down and cries in front of the group, normalize the experience by giving them room to express that emotion. Consider saying, *"Thank you for being brave and trusting us with that story. I'm sure many of the people in this room have had similar experiences like yours."*

Objective | To reflect upon the influence that parents (fathers/ mothers) have had on the participants while growing up.

Materials | Flipchart, markers and masking tape

STEPS

1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.

2 | **Ask** the participants to form 2 – 3 groups.

3 | Write on the flipchart paper the following questions:

- a) What positive childhood experiences things do you remember in your relationship with your father/ mother/ caregiver?
- b) What negative childhood experiences do you remember in your relationship with your father/ mother/ caregiver?
- c) Name one thing about your father/ mother/ caregiver that you want to take into your relationship with your children?
- d) Name one thing about your father/ mother/ caregiver that you do not want to repeat with your children?

4 | **Read** the questions aloud and **ask** groups to discuss. (*Each member of the group including the facilitator, should share their experiences in regard to each of the questions*) **Allow 20 minutes.**

5 | Once everyone has finished sharing, get back to plenary and let one participant from each small group give key highlights and general observations. **Allow 10 minutes.**

6 | **Use the questions below to guide the discussion**

- a) How can the bad experiences discussed in the groups be changed as we parent both girls and boys? *(Emphasize that in most cases, the negative and positive experiences stay with us for the rest of our lives. As parents /caregivers, we need to make a deliberate effort to practice the positive things and avoid the negative ones)*

Close the activity by highlighting some of the following:

1. *From the moment a child is born, his/her life is shaped by those around him/her especially the parents/caregivers.*
2. *Parents/caregivers have a deep and long lasting impact on their children's lives. For example, even as adults, we can still 'hear' our parent's voices or 'see' their actions in our lives (legacy). These legacies may be positive or negative, and are passed on intentionally or unintentionally.*
3. *Parents/ caretakers can have the greatest impact by teaching their child about different life issues e.g relationship skills, value of work, among others. These shape the person a child may become.*
4. *As parents, it is important to reflect on how we want our children to remember us.*

Activity 4.4: Father's support during pregnancy and bonding - For men alone

Time | 30 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know!

- a) Encourage participants to implement some of the practical ideas from the discussion as a way of being supportive and ensuring proper growth of the baby.
- b) During pregnancy it is important that the mother lives in a physically and emotionally safe environment, and eats a balanced diet.
- c) Pregnancy is a joyful experience but is also a stressful time for many couples. It is important to be patient and talk openly to avoid conflicts.
- d) Men as partners and fathers can play important roles in promoting the physical and emotional health of the mother, and the child during the pregnancy.
- e) If children are not loved and cared for, it may result in future problems like low self-esteem and desperately seeking someone else to love them, which can expose the child to sexual and gender based violence.

Objective | To discuss the importance of father's supportiveness during pregnancy and post-birth

Materials | Flipchart, masking tape and markers

STEPS

1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objectives.

2 | Read the story of an involved father to the group.

Story of an involved father in child care

Mr. Ssemakula from Kirowoza village is married with four children. Whenever his wife is pregnant, Mr. Ssemakula supports her by accompanying her to the health centre on his bicycle and later picks her up. Whenever the wife delivers and the baby is about 2 - 3 weeks, he take turns with his wife to carry the crying baby in the night. In his compound, he usually carries the older children on the bicycle, plays football with them and generally spends time with them. Their home does not have a lot of money, but, the family seems happy and healthy. On weekends, the family works together at the farm.

3

Ask participants to form 2 groups and discuss the questions below;

- a) Does what you have heard happen in your community or not? Why and why not?
- b) How does pregnancy affect the quality of couple relationships?
(During their sharing in the small groups, let participants identify 5-6 important issues that they would like to share with the larger group).
- c) Draw the table below and fill it up;

MOTHER	How can father support	Why father not doing
Attend maternal visits		
Live in a home free of physical, verbal or physiological violence		
Eat healthy and nutritious foods		
Abstain from drinking alcohol		
Get plenty of rest		
Drink clean water		
Abstain from smoking cigarettes		
Do light exercise		
Take vitamins		
Plan and procure clothes and mama kit for the unborn baby		

4

After 10 minutes, ask participants to return to the larger group and present what they discussed.

5

Continue the discussion using the questions below;

- a) Did you learn anything new?
- b) What are the barriers to men's involvement in family domestic care work?

6

After the presentation, allow 2-3 people to share their personal experiences in the larger group. ***(During the sharing challenge participants so that they emulate at least a few areas from Mr. Ssemakula that they can incorporate into their relationships with their children and wives).***

Close the activity by highlighting some of the points as necessary;

1. *When a woman is pregnant she has changes in her body which often affect her emotionally and physically. Because of this, some women may have relationship difficulties with their partners which may not be easy to sort out. This calls for patience. It is a good idea to have an open discussion with your partner so that both of you can express how you feel about the situation.*
2. *Partners should be sensitive, objective and realistic about issues that bring conflicts during pregnancy.*
3. *Try to avoid conflicts that can lead to violence because they:*
 - a) *seriously damage the wellbeing of the unborn child*
 - b) *seriously damage the wellbeing of the mother*
 - c) *Lead to stress in the family.*
4. *It is important that men participate actively during pregnancy by: talking about how the baby in the womb feels, accompanying the mother to pre-natal checks ups, planning for the birth of the child and helping with household chores like cooking, washing, etc*

Activity 4.5: Home practice

Time | 10 minutes

Materials | Flipchart, masking tape and markers

STEPS

1 | **Ask** the participants to practice one positive thing from their childhood which they can do to improve parent – child relationship.

2 | Bid participants farewell