Bryn Loftness - Interpersonal Communications

Project 3 Conflict in Relationships Project

**1. Conflict Log**

Friday 4/6: Bumped into Austin on my way to Natural Hazards class. We ended our long-term relationship two weeks prior. We have been taking space and not talking. He asked to have a civil meeting to exchange some shirts of mine he found at his place. I was hesitant, but he was persistent and I did have clothes to return as well so I agreed and set a time for later after class. We met up and had a productive and mature conversation setting boundaries for the future. He felt he got some closure from the conversation. I think it was a good idea that we got together and that it positively influenced the long-term outcome of our communication relationship.

Saturday 4/7: Early on in the evening I was hanging out and talking with my friend and asked him to let me know if he and his roommate, my other friend, were planning on going out to our friends place that night. He said that they weren’t but that he would let me know if the plans were to change. Later that night I went to his room and he, and his roommate- our other friend-was nowhere to be found. I called him, and the call went to voicemail early. He said the next day that his phone died and that he was just out at his car quick, but I knew he had been gone for several hours and didn’t come home for several hours afterward (I was playing ping pong with another friend in the main lobby so if he were to come home I would have seen him.) I didn’t really mind that he went out because he can do whatever he wants, and I was hanging out with a different, closer friend anyway. It isn’t a big deal if he wants to do his own thing; we have a big friend group. I was hurt that he didn’t just let me know that he didn’t want to hang out straight up. I would have been fine if he would have just told me he wanted to do his own thing instead of being shady. I just let it go and didn’t talk to him about it. There is no long-term outcome for this one-night conflict.

Tuesday 4/10: Was supposed to hear back about a job interview today. Never heard back, neither did anyone else I knew had applied. They were late and didn’t send out any notification of a delayed response. I was annoyed but restrained from emailing them so as to be patient and respectful. I avoided the conflict. I ended up hearing the next day around 2. (I got the job)

Wednesday 4/11: It had now been 1 full week since Mr. John Marshall had assured me he would set up an email, and never did so. I decided to let it sit for two more days just in case it was a busy week. I planned to confront him this Friday.

Friday 4/13:

Emailed John Marshall regarding his lack of follow-up. I used several I statements and tried to seem very genuine and non-aggressive. Here is that message:

*“ Good Afternoon Mr. John Marshall,*

*I am contacting you today to express my uneasiness and contempt with your lack of follow-up and subsequent lack of respect for me and my efforts. I was assured- by you- at the ASG meeting last Wednesday, April 4th, that you would be following up with me in regards to my campus safety concern. I expected you would take that assurance seriously as well as my concerns seriously. Having not received any follow-up in over 1 week, I am now certain that you, nor your assistant, will be contacting me.*

*I feel hurt that you explicitly said you were contacting your assistant as you were texting in front of me while I was expressing my anxieties- which took a lot of courage- and then you never actually followed through; it makes me unsure you were listening to me at all or contacting your assistant in the first place. I feel your actions were unprofessional and disrespectful to me and definitely did not leave me feeling like you, the Vice President of Student affairs, were taking my student affairs seriously.*

*Regardless of your lack of follow-up, I continued my efforts. After contacting the Fire Department and several members of our faculty, a solution has been decided that I have been assured will be implemented promptly. I no longer request a meeting with you.*

*I am disappointed with the lack of support I had from you on my concern, but in the end, I am just glad that I was able to find people that could support me through this endeavor.*

*Thank you for listening to my complaint.*

*Your Student,*

*Bryn Loftness*

*“*

I felt I was assertive about my emotions and thoughts without coming off rude. I hope that this does not create conflict, and instead opens his eyes and we have a better communication relationship in the future.

**2. Role Plays:**

1. Roommates disagreeing over whose television program should be watched

Role A: Competing / Role B: **Accommodating**

I chose Role B, Accommodating, because I don’t really mind watching what they want to watch, I only want to share my show if they actually want to watch it too. I’m always open to watching what they want to watch and if I don’t like it, I’ll just stop watching and watch my own show. I don’t want to force anyone to get into my interests if they aren’t interested too.

2. A student and a teacher disagreeing about the student’s grade on a paper

Role A: Competing / Role B: **Collaborating**

I chose Role B, Collaborating, because I want to be flexible and work with the teacher- not butt-heads with them until I get what I want. I like to foster a good, collaborative relationship with my teachers, instructors, and professors because I want to show they I respect their decisions with grading and teaching but also be assertive when I feel it should be altered.

3. A parent and daughter or son disagreeing about whether the parent will come to visit the daughter or son this weekend

Role A: **Accommodating** / Role B: Avoiding

I chose Role A, Accommodating, because I avoidance is a sign of disrespect and I would want to show I appreciate them wanting to go out of their way to visit me and spend time with me, but I would also want to take more of a compromising role because I want it to work equally well for both of us- if I had plans I wouldn’t want to disappoint others just to please others, I would want to try and find a solution that everyone is happy with.

4. A cashier and a customer disagreeing about whether the customer gave the cashier a twenty-dollar bill or a ten-dollar bill

Role A: Competing Role / B: **Compromising**

I chose Role B, Compromising, because I would want to find a solution that makes everyone happy. I know customer-service roles can be very difficult and often full of uncomfortable encounters, so I want to make things easier for them while also making sure I am not being swindled.

5. Two motorists, who have just had a minor collision, disagreeing about who is at fault for the accident

Role A: **Compromising** / Role B: Accommodating

I chose Role A, Compromising, because after a collision- even minor ones- everyone’s emotions and adrenaline is high so arguing would be pointless but so would just giving in to who’s at fault because insurance is very expensive. Making sure that we get the story straight and that everyone is at least a little comfortable with the outcome is most important.

6. A parent and his or her adult child disagreeing about whether the parent will come to live with the adult child

Role A: Competing / Role B: **Compromising**

I chose Role B, Compromising, because home is a sanctuary, and everyone should be comfortable with the place they call home. That can only happen if the living arrangements are compromised upon and everyone wins- at least a little.

7. Two fans at a ball game disagreeing about whom should get the last beverage a vendor has

Role A: **Cooperative** / Role B: Competing

I choose Role A, Cooperative, just because I know people at sports games can get pretty

rowdy and I wouldn’t want to upset anyone with their adrenaline high and maybe alcohol in their system just over a beverage. Better to be safe than sorry.

8. A taxicab driver and a customer disagreeing over the amount of the cab fare

Role A: Accommodating / Role B: **Compromising**

I chose Role B, Compromising, because-like I’ve previously stated- customer service jobs can be exhausting and full of difficult situations, so I would rather everyone come out happy than make their day more difficult or get jipped myself.

9. An intimate couple, disagreeing about which one of two parties to attend

Role A: **Collaborating** / Role B: Competing

I chose Role A, Collaborating, because I hate being in uncomfortable social situations so I would want a solution that makes me feel comfortable but still make my significant other happy with the outcome. I would want to take more of a compromising approach.

10. Two friends disagreeing over both wanting to date the same person

Role A: Avoiding / Role B: Competing / Role C: **Compromising** (write in)

I chose Role C, a write-in role of Compromising, because I think it would be not a good idea to avoid the situation and let it fester and I think it would be even worse to let the disagreement to ruin the friendship by competing. I think compromising and finding a solution that benefits both of us while not causing conflict would be ideal.

**3. Friends with a Difference**

A. Someone at least 10 years older than me

i. Doreen MusicAnderson, former coworker at Target Headquarters

B. Someone from a country where people speak a different language than you

i. Luis Steidle from Germany, long-time friend and ex-boyfriend from his time as an exchange student in Minnesota, just visited for a week two weeks ago

C. Someone with a different sexual orientation

i. Cinthya, my roommate, straight

D. Someone of a different race

i. Linda, my good friend, Hispanic

E. Someone of a different religion

i. Asha, my good friend from Minnesota, Muslim, open to informing me and sharing her life and customs with me though we did not share belief systems.

Question 1: With which of these people is communication easiest?

Communication is really easy with my good friend Luis, we do not maintain thorough contact when he is on his trips (he travels a lot) but when we are in person we can talk for hours about anything and everything. I feel it’s easy to ask lots of questions and never get bored with the conversation because he has lived such a different and unique life from mine that it there are a lot of cool things that he can tell me about and me to him! It’s nice to relate on some aspects and be so different in so many other aspects. I am very appreciative of our communication relationship.

Question 2: With which of this people is communication hardest?

In person Doreen is very easy to talk to and relate to, however being so far from her (she’s back in Minnesota) and her life being so busy back at HQ, it’s hard to stay in contact long distance. She doesn’t use the same social media platforms that I do on a regular basis and that is how I really stay in contact with my long distance friends so it’s definitely a challenge.

**4. Trait Forgiveness**

“Your Result: you are more likely to be a forgiving person.

**Your Score**

**45**

**Scores 0 - 29:** you are less likely to be a forgiving person. Examine your answers. Which ones could be improved? What could you do to change your score?

**Scores 30 - 60:** you are more likely to be a forgiving person.

**Question 1:** I can forgive a friend for almost anything.

**You answered:** Somewhat Agree

**Question 2:** I try to forgive others even when they don’t feel guilty for what they did.

**You answered:** Somewhat Disagree

**Question 3:** I can usually forgive and forget an insult.

**You answered:** Somewhat Agree

**Question 4:** I have always forgiven those who have hurt me.

**You answered:** Agree

**Question 5:** I am a forgiving person.

**You answered:** Strongly Agree

**Question 6:** People close to me probably think I hold a grudge for too long.

**You answered:** Disagree

**Question 7:** If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.

**You answered:** Neutral/Mixed

**Question 8:** I feel bitter about many of my relationships.

**You answered:** Strongly Disagree

**Question 9:** Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.

**You answered:** Disagree

**Question 10:** There are some things for which I would never forgive even a loved one.

**You answered:** Disagree”

Specific Description and Improvement:

Question 2: I struggle to forgive people when I feel they do not see how what they did affected me, I try and make it very clear and if they see the impact and take it into consideration I am usually pretty quick to forgive. If I feel they are not grasping it, it takes me a bit longer. I think I could get a little better at this, sometimes it comes off like I am trying to make them feel bad but in reality I am just trying to have them become more aware of my point of view.

**5. You and Relationships (pick 1)**

A relationship problem that I have commonly experienced is my partner having jealousy. It is the major precursor to the downfall of my last relationship. I am a very compartmentalized person, I think, and this causes me to want to keep certain aspects of my life private from other aspects- not because I am trying to hide parts of myself just that I like to have different spheres for different parts of my life. This includes keeping my friends not private, but separate, from my last significant other, Austin. He struggled with this aspect of me. He would express his jealousy for the “unknown” aspects of my life in not positive manners by insulting, disrespectful confrontation, and confronting perceived “rival” friends. I have several “attractive” friends that he saw as a threat to our relationship. He also saw my sexual orientation as a barrier in that he felt not only males were a threat, but also every female I spent my time with. He couldn’t handle how I live my life and at first, I took the strategy of avoidance and competition, and then trying to compromise. Avoidance worked for a while and we were able to just continue our relationship happily and he kept his obsessive jealousy contained. However, no methods were effective in the long term for fixing our problems because his jealousy and envy for the parts of my life I wanted separate caused too much uncertainty for the validity of the relationship. You can only try and convince your partner your faithful for so long before you don’t feel you want to be held down- and back- by them anymore; that was the situation when I decided it was time we split up and take time for ourselves.