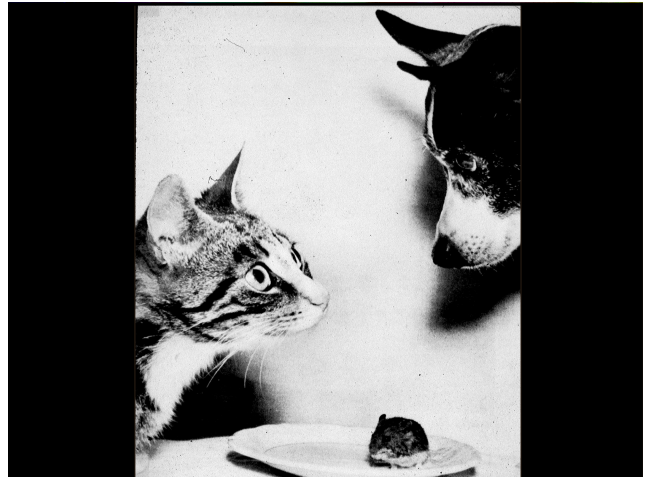**Defusing Land Mines**

Effectively Manage Conflict

Robert W. Strauss, M.D.

ACEP's Directors Academy

Dallas, 2022

1

2

Stereotypical presentations involve sitting and listening without participation. Effective learning involves multiple sensory modes.

Retention of Information

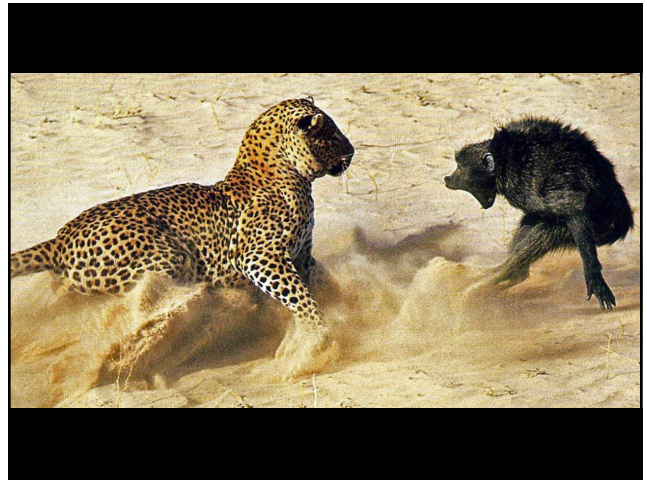| Mode	%
Sitting	10
AV Aids	40
Participating (Zoom?)	80

3

Conflict good or bad…

What causes conflict by well meaning people?

4

Conflict often
results from ineffective

Communication

is more than just the words

5

6

Mehrabian on Persuasion

Verbal Content   ___

Vocal Expression   ___

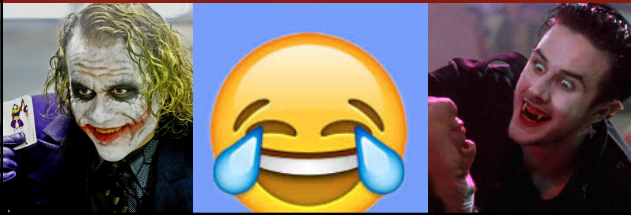Visual Cues   ___

100%

7

Mehrabian on Persuasion

Verbal Content   7

Vocal Expression   38

Visual Cues   55

100%

8

Verbal Incongruence

➢ The words don't match the tone, posture and/or general demeanor of the speaker. For instance…

9

Verbal Incongruence

➢ The words don't match the tone, posture and/or general demeanor of the speaker.

➢ Examples
  ➢ Recent Widower, "I'm fine, I'm fine."
  ➢ Parent to child, "I'm not YELLING!!"
  ➢ Drunk, "I only hadda cupla behrs."

10

Verbal Incongruence

A Personal Tale

11

Conflict Resolution
Rule #1

Observe the Activity

Listen to the Tone

12

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

I am a **commercial airline pilot** -- a highly-trained and educated professional, entrusted with a $85 million aircraft and the lives of hundreds of passengers, plus **countless thousands** of people on the ground below my flight path...

➢ Clear beginning and end

➢ When it's over, it's over

➢ It's important

13

UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

➢ Intensive – always

➢ Potential danger

➢ Unknown pending

➢ Sense of crisis

➢ Your total attention <u>NOW</u> is expected

14

Physiology

"With aging, we are less able to cope with physiologic stress…many can no longer cope with full time practice."
Dennis Whitehead

Burnout

"Evidence of substantial substance abuse among physicians."
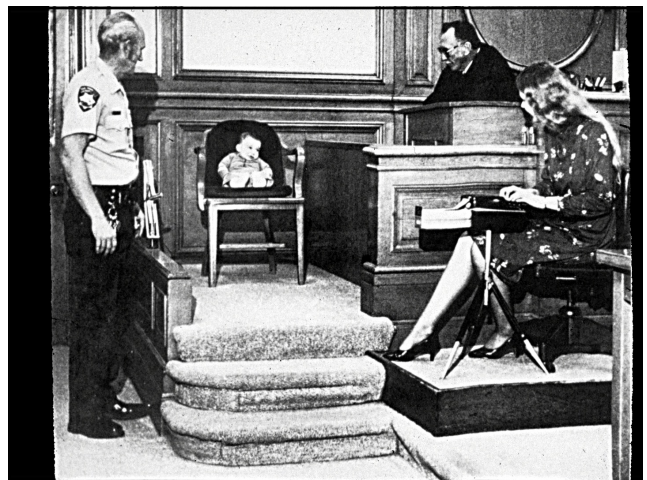
Jeff Margulies

15

16

4

17

18

Organizational Climate

➢ Unequal status and pay

➢ Authoritarian "Captain of the ship"

➢ Limited resources

➢ Malpractice fears modify behavior

19

20

To Upright / Vertical patients, which is the most important "C"

➢ Care
➢ Cost
➢ Caring
➢ Convenience

21

The 4 C's

➢ Convenience
➢ Caring
➢ Care
➢ Cost

22

Convenience

➢What we want:
  Attention now!
➢ How long will you wait for coffee?

23

Convenience

➢What we want:
  Attention now!
➢ How long will you wait…?
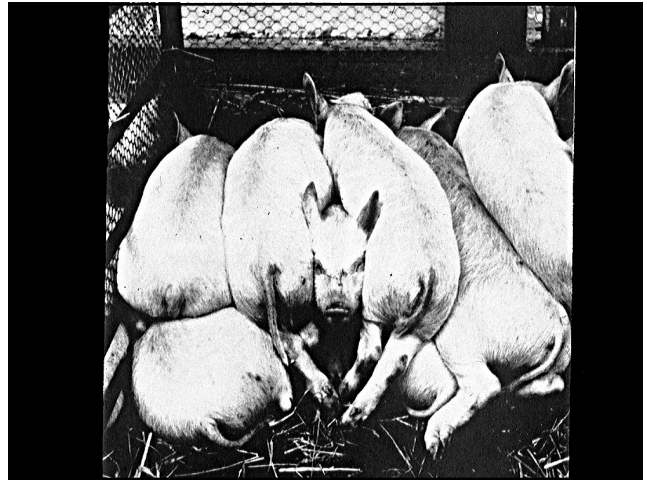➢ How long did you wait?

24

6

Caring

It's not the level of care by which we're judged.

We take short cuts
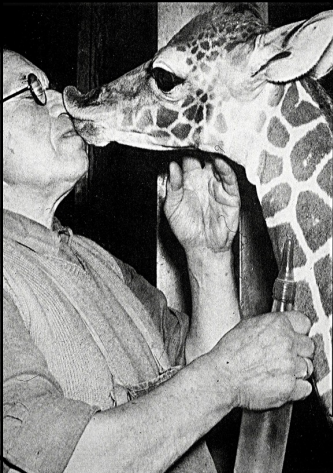
Vince Markovcik

25

26

Caring

Caring goes beyond giving a high standard of care.

Vince Markovchick

You've got to: "Kiss 'em when they come in, kiss 'em when they leave and touch 'em every 20 minutes."

Marshall Segal

27

An Environment of Stress!

➢ Dissatisfied Patients

➢ Poor Communication

➢ Uncontrolled Work Environment

➢ Expectations v. Reality

➢ Chaos

➢ …and how do we respond to stress

28

29

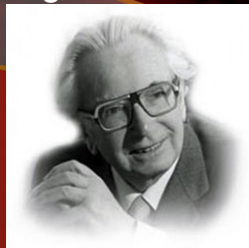We respond to stress by…habit, patterns we learned as children

Conflict Resolution
Rule #2

Under stress, we revert to our own individually consistent personality style.

30

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

Viktor Frankl

31

For most of us, the lag time between provocation, impulse and action is shorter than a heartbeat—just a quarter of a second between the trigger event and the response of the amygdala. In that fraction of a second, our emotions have time to swamp our judgment—and often do.

Mastering your own mind
Katherine Ellison

32

Conflict Resolution
Rule #3

We all have a physical manifestation of our stress

33

What is your

personal physical cue
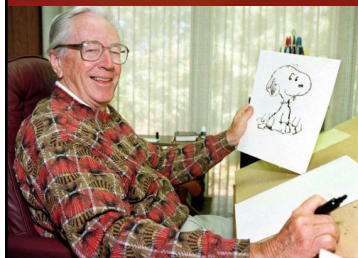
What is your individual manifestation of stress?

34

Mistake behavior

Do we learn from

our mistakes?

. . . Do you?

35

Lucy: Do you think anybody ever really changes?
But, we can change...right?
Linus: I've changed a lot in the last year.

Lucy: I mean for the better!

Charles M. Schulz
Cartoonist and
Philosopher

36

**Conflict Resolution
Rule #4**

Mistakes Reinforce

Mistake Behavior

37

"It takes 18 months
to two years to change
a behavior . . . and you've
really got to want to."

Harles Cone

38

Four Stages Of Learning

Riding a bike / Groundhog Day

1. UnConscious InCompetence

2.   Conscious InCompetence

3.   Conscious   Competence

4. UnConscious   Competence

39

Changing

"Stress Tolerance Level"

A Personal Tale
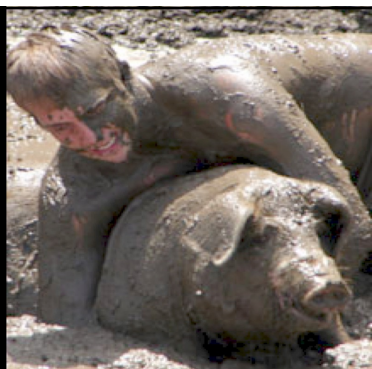
40

Conflict Resolution Rule #5

You and I will more
readily make a change
when we believe it
will make things easier.

41

<u>Irony of the agitated</u>
The most difficult
people (blamers)
don't realize that
they are the terrorists

<u>Some won't change</u>.
And the corollary…

42

Never wrestle with pigs! They
like it and you just get dirty.

43

Conflict Resolution
Resolving Conflicts

44

Avoiding the worst offenses

While it is tempting to fight fire with fire… hot, interpersonal, tense conflicts can often be deescalated or resolved or with simple…

(Responding to emotion without emotion.)

Fisher and Ury

45

46

47

"To make oneself understandable to people, one must first speak to their eyes."

Napoleon

48

The Theory of

"Yes"

49

The Theory of "YES"

- Ask for something likely lead to a "NO!"
- Use a form of "YES," without giving in.
- Discuss success of response
- Switch and Repeat

Duration <u>3</u> minutes

# of people <u>2 - 3</u>

50

Resolving Difficult Situations
Techniques to take home

➢ Silence
➢ Eye Communication
➢ Theory of "Yes"
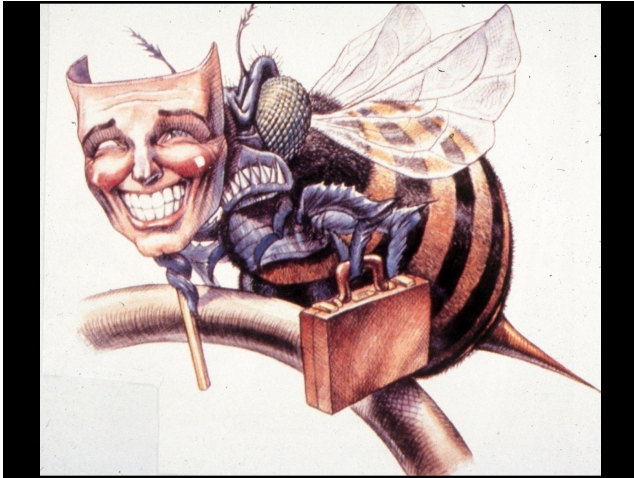➢ Acknowledge and Validate

51

Under the theory:
Anything you
feed will grow...

Never blame
a blamer!

52

53

Acknowledge and Validate

➢ Blaming blamers → escalates

➢ Placating, the common response, does not lead to resolution

➢ Acknowledgement and validation is consistently successful as a first step in resolving discord

54

Better still…Acknowledge & Validate

Provide an objective mirror, then give them what they want.

• The "earache"
• The "prolonged" wait
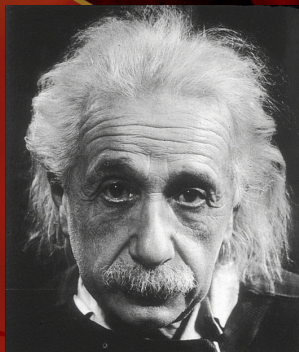
55

Breakout Room
Acknowledge and Validate

• Blame B for something that aggravates you
• Answer by Acknowledging and Validating
• Discuss effectiveness of response.
• Then Switch Roles

Duration: 3 min

# of people: 3

56

One last thing…most people ruminate after a shift

Catch people in-the-act

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

— John F. Kennedy

57

Saying "Thank You"

➢ The "Fly-by"

58

Saying "Thank You"

➢ The "Fly-by"
➢ The "generic"

59

Saying "Thank You"

➢ The "Fly-by"
➢ The "generic"
➢ Getting Personal

60

15

Saying "Thank You"

- The "Fly-by"
- The "generic"
- Getting Personal
- The Chair that didn't fly away

61

"The skill to do comes from the doing."

Cicero

62

63