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SWK246 – Interpersonal Communication Skills

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11.2 Defensive and Supportive Language

1. Defense-arousing statement: That's what happens when you don't plan. You need to follow their rules while you're living in their home.

Type of defensive language: neutral and controlling

Supportive statement: Wow, things didn't turn out the way that you expected! I think it might be hard to follow your parent's rules.

Type of supportive language: empathic and provisional

2. Defense-arousing statement: You don't know what you're talking about! You're always acting like someone else.

Type of defensive language: certain and superior

Supportive statement: I see you acting differently. Are you okay? I think you're acting like the way you are, because you're afraid to show the real you.

Type of supportive language: equal and provisional

3. Defense-arousing statement: That will never work. You need to get to know him and see where it will go.

Type of defensive language: certain and controlling

Supportive statement: I'd like to go to dinner and meet your new partner. I know that you must be interested in him that you want me to meet him.

Type of supportive language: spontaneity and empathic

4. Defense-arousing statement: There's only one way I can handle this problem... That's what happens when you don't take your time and rush through the job.

Type of defensive language: controlling and neutral

Supportive statement: Looks like the job didn't turn out the way I expected. But I'll let you do again and hopefully it'll come out better than the last time.

Type of supportive language: empathic and equal

5. Defense-arousing statement: That's just how people are that want to copy. She just wants to be like me.

Type of defensive language: neutral and evaluation

Supportive statement: I see it a different way. She likes my style. I think I should her more of my styles.

Type of supportive language: equal and provisional

6. Defense-arousing statement: You need to let me know when you are coming over. I don't like when people come over unannounced.

Type of defensive language: certain and neutral

Supportive statement: Hey, so sorry I didn't know you were dropping by and I already had plans with my mother. Let's plan to get together another day.

Type of supportive: Problem Orientation and spontaneity

7. Defense-arousing statement: You need to shut the lights off! You always leave the lights on!

Type defensive language: controlling and certain

Supportive statement: Let's figure out a way you don't forget to shut the lights off, so that the light won't bother me when at night.

Type of supportive language: problem orientation and description

8. Defense-arousing statement: What are you always saying nice things to him? And you like saying it when I'm not around. I'm so annoyed by it!

Type of defensive language: superior and certain

Supportive statement: Why don't you guys ever praise me the way that you do with my brother?

It would me make feel good when you say nice things to me.

Type of supportive language: provisional and equal

11.3 Writing Assertive Messages

1. Behavior: I don't like when you're constantly telling me what to do.

Interpretation: I thought you would stop when I spoke to you about not too long ago.

Feeling: It's really annoying me.

Consequence: If you continue, I'll distance myself.

Intention: I want you to know how I felt.

2. Behavior: I'm so tired of feeling not wanted.

Interpretation: I want you to understand that I need you to give me more attention.

Feeling: It makes me feel sad.

Consequence: I thought that by me expressing how I feel you would understand me.

Intention: I want you to make me wanted.

3. Behavior: I like that you are being attentive to me.

Interpretation: I know that you are being mindful of that you are saying to me.

Feeling: I feel so happy and cared about.

Consequence: Since you're being so thoughtful, I'm going to do something special.

Intention: That means a lot to me.

4. Behavior: It feels good to know that I'm the greatest.

Interpretation: I really appreciate that you feel that way about me.

Feeling: It makes me feel happy.

Consequence: I think you're the greatest too!

Intention: It good to hear nice things.

5. Behavior: I'm offended that you called me a slob.

Interpretation: That isn't a really nice thing to say to me.

Feeling: I'm really upset.

Consequence: You're not my friend.

Intention: I don't want to be around you anymore.

6. Behavior: You're always expecting me to do you a favor all the time.

Interpretation: You're upset because I can't do this favor?

Feeling: I'm feeling annoyed.

Consequence: I'm not doing anymore favors for you if you're going to act this way, we can't do any favors.

Intention: I can't do anymore favors for you.