

A Team Approach to Educational Change

J. Patrick Howley

Teams must balance their attention between the tasks they are doing and the processes by which they accomplish those tasks. To achieve this balance, SDP's director of Teaching and Adult Development presents (1) models for understanding other people, (2) concepts that support a team's sense of purpose, (3) descriptions of team members' appropriate roles, and (4) rich descriptions of specific behaviors that bring to life the guiding principles of no-fault, consensus, and collaboration.

When Connie, a fourth-grade teacher in one of our Comer schools, joined the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT), she was quite worried about whether she would be able to serve adequately as a grade-level representative. Her school had five fourth-grade teachers who were quite diverse in their approaches to teaching and learning. She didn't know what was expected of her on the team and how much she might be able to contribute. "After all," she said, "I'm just a teacher. What can I do?" In addition, she felt inadequate voicing her opinion at the meetings; there were so many people there with very strong opinions.

NOTE: Copyright © 2004 by The Yale School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center. All rights reserved. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success*. For information, contact Corwin Press, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, California 91360; www.corwinpress.com.

TWO MODELS FOR UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE'S CONCERNS

Connie's story illustrates an important point we make in the School Development Program (SDP): We must consider relationships and the personal concerns that people have as they work and interact on teams. At SDP we use two models that help us to understand these personal concerns in a general way. One is a model developed by William Schutz (1967), a psychologist and organizational consultant. Schutz says that people have three basic concerns:

1. Inclusion: Am I in or out? Do I feel included or excluded on my team?
2. Control: Do I have power to influence, or do others have more power?
3. Affection: Do I want to be close to or distant from other members of the team or school?

Another model, introduced in an affective education program directed by Gerry Weinstein (1970) at the University of Massachusetts, describes children as having three concerns:

1. Identity: Who am I?
2. Connectedness: How do I relate to others?
3. Power: Do I have any influence, power, or impact on others?

These models, which are similar and overlapping, can be viewed as personal needs of people. At any particular point in time these concerns can have a lesser or greater influence in people's lives. With or without team members' knowledge, these concerns become part of the team's dynamics. These two models can be used as a lens to understand the concerns Connie brings to the team. Connie may say to herself, "Who am I on this team?" and answer, "Well, I'm just a teacher. What can I do?" These concerns refer to identity, or may be related to power or control. If she is also wondering, "How do I relate to others?" this would be a concern with connectedness, as she thinks about her relationships with both her SPMT teammates and her colleagues in the fourth grade.

P + E + O + F + R = M: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING WHY AND HOW PEOPLE SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY

In our training sessions, I show a slide that says: $P + E + O + F + R = M$. This little formula is another way to help us understand what is happening to Connie as she comes on the team.

P + E

Connie has Perceptions (P) of both herself and others. She also has perceptions of her school, her grade level, her SPMT, and SDP. She comes to the team with

previous Experiences (E). She also might experience the school as a great place to work. She might feel comfortable with her colleagues but uncomfortable with the experiences of all the changes that have taken place in the past few years.

O

She has witnessed the changes created by a new superintendent and a rapid turnover of three principals in her school. Programs have come and gone with each change of principal. These experiences influence her Organizers (O). She organizes her perceptions and experiences and creates theories to make sense of what has been happening to her. One theory might be that she believes that principals have lost touch with children by being out of the classroom so long. Therefore, the decisions the principals make may not take into account what Connie experiences with children each day in the classroom. And she might decide that the changes are too many and too soon. She might also conclude that leaders do not confer enough with teachers or include them in the decision-making process. In addition, she might determine that she is losing her touch, getting too old, and is not good enough as a teacher anymore. (This would be an identity issue in Weinstein's model, described above).

F

Feedback (F) is the verbal and nonverbal information we receive from others. Feedback might be given directly to us regarding our behavior. Sometimes we are given feedback in a deliberate, thoughtful manner. Most of the time we get feedback in a haphazard way with little thought given to how it might help or hurt us. Connie might be received as a new member of the SPMT with smiles and handshakes, or she might be ignored. She might hear immediately that members are discouraged and disheartened by all of the changes taking place, and by their inability as an SPMT to make a difference in raising test scores. She might hear that SDP focuses too much on relationships and not enough on demonstrable academic achievement. These conversations might just be gossip. They could become feedback if the team were willing to share the conversations in an open setting in which they could address the issues and, perhaps, solve the problem or the misperceptions.

R

Reflection (R) is what Connie may do as she is driving away from her first SPMT meeting. If she becomes deep in thought she may suddenly realize that she has passed her exit on the highway. During that time, she probably reflected on her perceptions of herself, the school, and the SPMT. In addition, she has reflected on her experiences in the school over the years. As she drives, she tries to make some sense of all her years in education and may even reevaluate how she thinks about the authority of the principal. She may come up with a new organizer that says, "The principal is not the only person responsible for our successes or failures. All of us are. We are in this together, and we need to collaborate. We need to make decisions by consensus. We must not continually blame each other or even ourselves, but instead live the no-fault guiding principle." These new organizers might give her new insight and new hope about what might be accomplished in her school.

M

All of the concepts described up to this point lead to creating Meaning (M). Our need is to make sense (meaning) of our perceptions, experiences, organizers, feedback, and reflections. The meaning we make can be incomplete or off the mark. We assume that the meaning we make is the *truth*. This model helps us to engage in meta-cognition—to think about our thinking. When we share our reflections with others and they share theirs with us, we are doing what we call process work. Our openness to really hearing ourselves and others will lead to a broader and more complete picture: a deeper, enriching, and more accurate meaning that is more aligned with others with whom we work.

The $P + E + O + F + R = M$ framework is part of our leadership training for two reasons. First, the framework helps participants to know that during the training they will be expected to learn in different ways. They will learn from their own perceptions and experiences in schools, from the perceptions and experiences of other participants, from the concepts presented by Yale SDP staff, from the feedback they receive, and from their own reflections during the week of the training. Experiential learning is the primary learning tool of the training. Second, participants are expected to go back to work with their colleagues who did not have these experiences. Therefore they need to create learning opportunities and experiences that replicate what they have learned in SDP's leadership training. In the training, we attend to each factor in the equation. Each perception, experience, organizer, feedback, and reflection shapes or influences how participants make meaning of their experience. This is how we learn, and this is why everyone learns differently. The school faces the challenge of each member of the school community having different perceptions, experiences, organizers, feedback they have received, and ways of reflecting. We therefore come into the school with very different ways of making meaning of the world and our school.

METHODS FOR STRENGTHENING THE WORK OF TEAMS

The Concept of the Container

The equation described above highlights differences in concerns, needs, viewpoints, energy, focus, and interests. Given the diversity and complexity of human beings, it might seem almost impossible to bring even a small group of individuals to a common understanding, much less to a commitment to action. All of these differences can be described as energy. It is easy to imagine all of this energy going in all different directions. The question becomes, "How can we contain, support, and focus all of this energy so that the energy is aligned, complementary, and integrated into common causes?"

The leadership training introduces the concept of the container after participants have discussed the many concerns they have about relationships in their schools. The container seen in Figure 10.1 shows the children we work with placed inside a figurative container of adult hands. This concept of a container holding and supporting a group of children, or a plan or a concept, can be a powerful model for helping a group of people to guide their common work. No one can go it alone anymore. We need one another in order to fulfill our responsibilities to our schools and

children. The concept of the container provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on how they can respond more effectively to the diversity of needs, feelings, and thinking of team members. Knowledge of the concept of the container helps us take the energy of a team, whether positive or negative, and channel it productively into focusing on problem solving for the developmental needs of children.

Figure 10.1 Providing consistent expectations and support for children



SOURCE: Copyright © 2004 by The Yale School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. www.corwinpress.com.

Imagine me standing before you with a container, a paper bag. I take a pitcher of water and pour the water into it. The water almost immediately begins to spill out. Just as water spills out of the container, so do children act out and misbehave. If the container is not strong enough, it cannot support their healthy development. I use this illustration of the container to make three points.

Point One: Family, School, and Places of Worship

First, focusing on the child, I ask, "What are the containers that both support and contain children in our society?" The typical answers are family, school, and places of worship. The consistent messages of these three structures and our expectations of children's behavior give children the containers they need for their healthy development. As adults work together on what is best for children and their development, they are building a strong container.

It is the communication among the adults in these structures (family, school, places of worship) that prevents children from "falling through the cracks." An example of communication between the school and the community comes from a principal in one of our districts who visited a nearby store where children from her school hung out. In talking with the store owner, she learned that many children were eating junk food, and some children were stealing items from the store. This was exactly the type of communication she desired with store owners in the school's neighborhood.

At another time, she visited a condominium near the school because she had heard that children were going in and going out of one of the residences during the school day. She next met with the police so they could patrol both the store and the condominium and look into the activities of the students in their neighborhood. She also met with parents and brought the concerns to their attention. As the parents, teachers, principal, police, condominium management association, and store owner work together, they are creating a strong container. The children will experience adults working together to ensure they act in appropriate ways. The need for and the power of the container is obvious in this context.

Point Two: The Guiding Principles: Consensus, Collaboration, No-fault

Second, I make the point that the three guiding principles should act as the container for all the teams: the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT) and any committee that the SPMT sets up, the Student and Staff Support Team (SSST), and the Parent Team (PT). As members commit themselves to using the guiding principles, their actions on the teams are led not by finding fault with others or blaming people, but instead by working toward addressing and trying to solve problems.

A commitment to collaborative relationships enables team members to hear one another and to support one another by building on the comments in the dialogue. Dialogue does not mean thinking alike. As described by David Bohm (1992), it is "thinking together" (p. 204). A commitment to consensus enables us to make higher quality decisions. In order for the three guiding principles to work, we first have to agree that these are our expectations, agreements, and commitments to our team. This makes a strong container for the teams (see Figure 10.2).

Figure 10.2 Providing consistent expectations and support for parents and staff



SOURCE: Copyright © 2004 by The Yale School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. www.corwinpress.com.

Point Three: The Principal and the Teams

Third, I make the point that the SPMT itself and the other members of the school community also need to have a container. The principal, chairperson, and facilitator form a container by meeting on a regular basis to discuss the work of the SPMT. They should look at SDP documents that describe effective teams and ask each other questions such as: "Are we process oriented?" "Does the team have a sense of community?" "Is there trust?" "Do we have effective relationships on the teams so that people are working together and accomplishing their tasks?" They also need

to ask: "Are we task oriented?" "Are we focusing on our Comprehensive School Plan at our meetings?" "Do we focus on solving problems?" "Are we using our time effectively?" "What can each of us do to attend to both task and relationship issues?"

When the leaders in the school meet on a regular basis, they are forming a psychological container. While in this container, the leaders discuss emotionally charged issues relevant to the school community so that all of the energy in the school is being guided in a positive direction for children. What I have described is a container, within a container, within a container. This ensures that—like a strong paper cup, within a strong paper cup, within a strong paper cup—no water can possibly spill out, no child will fall through the cracks, no child will drop out of the psychological containers that we have created.

What helps Connie, and indeed all members of the school community, is knowing that their concerns about children will be heard and addressed. Everyone needs to know that each one has a responsibility to participate in improving the school. Connie needs to know that she has a role to play on the team. The descriptions found below help all to know the work of the SPMT and the responsibilities of its members.

Activation of Team Roles

Activation of team roles is another method for strengthening the work of teams. Because people are different, their perceptions of the world and the school differ. And because people become team members with many different and personal concerns, the challenge for the team is to perceive the diversity as a strength instead of a liability. When an SPMT uses the guiding principles of no-fault, collaboration, and consensus, they strengthen their work as a team. These principles help build a strong container for supporting what is inside. These roles help the team to see that everyone is responsible for making the team and the school work efficiently and effectively. The roles are described below.

Group Member (applicable to all team members)

On collaborative teams all members are very *active*. The members control what happens during meetings. Members contribute their ideas, insights, opinions, and suggestions, and they give feedback about both the tasks (the content of the meetings) and the process (how the team works together). Each member's *voice* on the team is important and should be heard. Many members of the team have dual roles (see below). As a team evolves, the need diminishes for formally designating who fulfills which role because all members of the team will take responsibility for the following:

- telling the people whom they represent about the team's accomplishments
- helping the team to stay on task
- listening and helping all members to be heard
- looking at the school from a global perspective and helping make decisions that are best for children and the entire school community
- asking continuously for input; sharing thoughts, feelings, and perceptions; and asking for feedback

- setting the agenda in accordance with feedback received from constituent groups
- collecting and analyzing data to help make decisions regarding teaching, learning, and the curriculum
- taking notes and clarifying communication both within the team, and between the team members and the rest of the school population

Chairperson

The chairperson has a key role—and one of the most difficult roles—on a team. The chairperson helps the team create agendas and the time frame for each item on the agenda. During the meeting, the chairperson keeps the team on task, guiding the team by keeping it focused on addressing the items on the agenda and accomplishing tasks within the time frames. The chairperson should meet with the principal and facilitator both before and after meetings to discuss how to help the meetings run effectively. The chairperson orchestrates the meeting, looking often to the principal and facilitator to ensure that tasks address issues from a schoolwide perspective, and that attention is paid to details. The chairperson also looks to see if the work of the team is balanced between task work and process work. The chairperson guides the team through the agenda as quickly and smoothly as possible, and yet slowly enough that members of the team can fully address all of the relevant issues.

Principal/Administrator

The administrator helps set up meeting times and locations, and ensures that the notes of the meetings are distributed to everyone in the school community. The presence of a school administrator at all meetings helps members to recognize the importance of the work of the team. Rather than running the meeting, the administrator supports the work of the chairperson and facilitator. The administrator guides from a distance by having meetings with the chairperson and facilitator before and after the team meeting. During the meeting the administrator helps members see the big picture of the school, the school community, board issues, and city, state, and federal issues. In addition, the administrator helps to define or clarify the parameters of the team's power, as well as district issues that impact on the principal and, as a result, the team. The principal also informs the team of the superintendent's decisions, budget constraints, board policy, school law, and state mandates.

Facilitator

The facilitator has the most difficult role. The facilitator listens simultaneously to the content of the discussion and the process: Who talks and for how long? Who is not so active? When there are differences or conflicts, has each side of a conflict been heard completely? At the same time, the facilitator listens to the content of the meeting in order to contribute as a member and to be able to know if the content is on or off track. The facilitator must work with the chairperson and principal during, before, and after meetings. On larger teams or teams with many diverse and strong differences, it may be helpful to have two facilitators. The facilitator makes interventions to help clarify issues, help people listen to one another, help everyone

participate, and help clarify communication among people on the team if there are misunderstandings. The facilitator watches to see how to help the chairperson run the meeting, and to see if people are on board with both the content and the process. If people have come late or have to leave for a while, the facilitator ensures that they have the information and support to be effective team members.

If the team gets stuck in any way, the facilitator helps the team get unstuck and accomplish what it has set out to do. The facilitator does this primarily by stopping or slowing down the task work and asking questions about the process. The facilitator also watches for confusion, invites people to ask questions, and tries to help the team process in any way, such as shutting the door if there is too much outside noise or getting paper and pencils for people who forgot to bring their own. The facilitator is the caretaker of the whole team process.

Notetaker (Recorder)

If detailed minutes need to be recorded, two people should be responsible for this role, both so that the notes will be complete, and so that each notetaker will also have the time to be an active team member. Rather than recording everything that is discussed, often just the key issues, decisions, and rationale for the decisions are needed for the record. The level of detail should be decided by the team as one of the mutually agreed upon rules. At the end of each meeting, the notetaker(s) should review the minutes with the team.

Timekeeper

Periodically during the meeting, the timekeeper lets members know how much time has been allotted for an agenda item and how much time still remains for that agenda item. The team can renegotiate their time frames as needed. Some timekeepers make cards that say "15 minutes remaining," "10 minutes remaining," and "5 minutes remaining." They hold them up as reminders.

Liaison

The liaison represents the team by reporting its progress to other teams. The liaison might create a newsletter to help inform those outside the team or community. The liaison also collects information from other teams and passes it on to team members. The liaison could also meet with other liaisons to discuss similar agenda items and process issues (e.g., how to improve meetings). This information is then shared with team members.

Reporter

The reporter is the spokesperson for the team, representing the voices of the team and ensuring that communication and collaboration occur among teams. In large trainings or large meetings, the reporter's role is to report out to the larger community of participants a summary of the team discussion.

Process Observer

In the past, the process observer in our Leadership Training 102 has not been a member of the team. At the same time that the team members have been engaged in learning and interacting on their team, the process observer has been trained to observe and take notes about what is said and done by team members. The primary role of the process observer is to help the team learn about team processes and group dynamics. The process observer does this by providing nonjudgmental feedback to the team near the end of each day of training. Because in a collaborative team everyone is expected to be a leader in some way, the focus of the feedback is on the leadership behavior of the team members. The framework for the feedback also relates to the three guiding principles; the six developmental pathways; the gifts, strengths, and contributions of members; and how the team can improve its effectiveness.

ROLE EXPECTATION CARDS

Cards have been created to give team members visual reminders of the expectations of their own role and the roles of others. The group member card is a reminder for all members of the team to always be actively engaged, either by listening, speaking, leading, or following. This card sits in the middle of the table to remind all members to be active participants. The cards help those new to the team or those observing to see that the team has a protocol that guides their work together. Figure 10.3 shows the expectations listed on the role cards that are placed on the tables at all meetings to remind members of how they can work together more effectively.

Figure 10.3 Role expectation cards

<p>Group Member (applicable to all members of the team)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent voices of the school community • Communicate back to the school community or group represented the decisions made by the team • Communicate the reasons for those decisions • Be very active on the team and contribute ideas, insights, opinions, and suggestions • Listen, listen, and listen some more! • Be willing to support a team decision, even if you do not fully agree with it
<p>Chairperson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help create an agenda with input from team members • Call the meeting to order • Define the tasks clearly • Keep the team on task • Expedite the making of decisions • Keep discussions focused on children and the agenda items

(Continued)

Figure 10.3 (Continued)

<p>Principal/Administrator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help set up meeting locations and times • Ensure that information is distributed as needed • Help members see the "big picture" (school board issues, goals, state and district mandates, etc.) • Help define and clarify parameters of the team's power and responsibility • Help identify issues that might relate to the principal, superintendent, budget, board policy, school law, etc • Help make the meetings child centered
<p>Facilitator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the chairperson and the principal by helping the team with its process (relationship) issues • Listen actively • Help everyone participate • Help everyone to be heard • Clarify confusion or differences by paraphrasing what is heard • Help differences to be discussed and resolved • Support and ensure that information summarized by the reporter or notetaker is communicated to other groups and teams
<p>Notetaker (Recorder)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record minutes of the meeting • List the key decisions made by the team • Record who will do what and when • Provide copies of minutes for the entire school community • Maintain a file of the minutes for each meeting
<p>Timekeeper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the team members know when they are at midpoint in time on an agenda item • Let the team know when five minutes are left and when one minute is left • Negotiate for more time if it is needed • Help the team begin and end on time, or negotiate to change time frame
<p>Reporter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with the team the notes taken by the notetaker • Decide with the team the most important or relevant information to report out • Summarize the information and any key decisions made that other groups might need to know • Stand up and deliver the information to the larger group (e.g., at a training event)
<p>Process Observer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes on behaviors seen that help or hinder the tasks and relationships • Provide nonjudgmental feedback about observed behaviors at the end of the meeting or the beginning of the next meeting • Help the team have a dialogue on its effectiveness (may sometimes be done in conjunction with the facilitator)

SOURCE: Copyright © 2004 by The Yale School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center. All rights reserved. Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. www.corwinpress.com.

FEEDBACK DESCRIPTION GUIDES

The Feedback Description Guides that appear in Figures 10.4, 10.5, and 10.6 are also useful tools for strengthening the work of teams. The behavior descriptions listed in each guide help to further clarify which behaviors help or hinder the team.

Figure 10.4 Feedback description guide: Consensus

Task behaviors are behaviors that help the team to accomplish its tasks.	
Using this task behavior the team member or team . . .
Initiating	helps define what tasks need to be done; suggests goals or action steps.
Seeking information	asks questions seeking opinions, perceptions, and data from team members, the larger school community, and others.
Informing	offers facts, gives opinions, presents needed information to the team.
Clarifying	repeats or interprets what has been said or decided and asks for confirmation.
Summarizing	synthesizes what has been discussed and draws a conclusion for the team to consider.
Testing reality	checks to see if an idea or information fits with the data. Checks to see if an idea or suggestion will work.
Directing	helps the team create and maintain a sense of direction.
Pressing for results	keeps the team on task to accomplish its goals.
Systematizing	offers suggestions for organizing data with procedures (e.g., charts); provides procedures or strategies for accomplishing tasks.
Making decisions	helps the team make decisions through data gathering, prodding the team, offering procedures and options for next steps.

SOURCE: Adapted in part from the work of NTL/Learning Resources Corporation (1976) in their publication, "Role Functions in a Group." Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book www.corwinpress.com.

Figure 10.5 Feedback description guide: Collaboration

Process or maintenance behaviors are behaviors that build and maintain the teams' working relationships.	
Using this process or maintenance behavior the team member or team . . .
Showing care and warmth	shows concern and respect for the viewpoints of others. Seeks to include others.
Demonstrating listening	paraphrases other people's comments.
Giving feedback	describes the specific behavior and describes how it affects others on the team.
Asking for feedback	seeks input from the team (example: "Is this working?" "Am I off track here?" "What is the best way for us to proceed?").
Being open, and "leveling"	says what they feel, what they are concerned about or appreciate, and what they want or need.
Showing empathy	demonstrates understanding of how the other person experiences things.
Staying in the present	is in tune with what is happening on this team, now, rather than discussing "How we used to do it" or getting impatient and wanting to get on to the next step.
Harmonizing	attempts to help people explore differences and reconcile disagreements.
Gate keeping	suggests procedures that facilitate participation. Suggests ways for people to communicate more openly.
Exploring differences	helps the team look at another point of view by asking if someone might see a situation differently.
Testing consensus	asks team for agreement on an issue to see if the team is ready for a decision.
Encouraging	acknowledges and promotes the contributions of others.
Compromising	admits to own errors and willingly compromises.
Facilitating conflicts	wants to hear both sides of a disagreement; asks each person or a representative of each side of an argument to discuss further what they feel and why they feel that way.
Setting standards	helps clarify what the team is trying to do or to accomplish.

SOURCE: Adapted in part from the work of NTL/Learning Resources Corporation (1976) in their publication, "Role Functions in a Group." Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. www.corwinpress.com.

Figure 10.6 Feedback description guide: No-fault

Nonfunctional behaviors are behaviors that do not contribute to either the group's task or process. Functional behaviors support both task and process.		
When this unproductive behavior arises . . .	Use this functional behavior so that the team member or team . . .
Blaming	Focusing on solving problems (No blaming)	does not find fault with staff, parents, the team, or other teams. Instead, individuals try to solve problems by sharing ideas and offering strategies.
Aggression	Respecting others (Lack of aggression)	does not attack individuals or groups (including joking about them). Instead, gives nonjudgmental feedback.
Fighting	Attending to process (No fighting)	does not argue by going over the same ground again and again. Instead, will compromise or offer alternative ideas.
Controlling	Recognizing others' rights (Refraining from controlling)	does not control the meetings by talking over others, interrupting, or attempting to get others to agree with them. Instead, encourages others to share their points of view.
Drifting	Staying on task (Absence of drifting)	does not go off on tangents that are not relevant to the team task or process. Instead, remains focused and on task at all times.
Blocking	Remaining flexible (No blocking)	does not block the team by disagreeing beyond reason, stubbornly resisting, or having and/or pursuing a hidden agenda. Instead, is open and willing to consider new ideas.
Dominating	Sharing time and power (No dominating)	does not dominate the meetings or monopolize the time or the topics being discussed by the team. Instead, encourages others to participate.
Out-of-field	Putting the team's needs first (No out-of-field behavior)	does not display out-of-field behaviors such as not being on task, seeking attention or recognition. Instead, notices what the team needs from its members and provides help when needed or asked for.
Avoidance	Tolerating conflict (No avoidance)	does not engage in such avoidance behavior as changing the subject or the use of humor to avoid conflict. Instead, listens to the conflicts and may use humor to help members feel more at ease to talk more openly.
Withdrawing	Being fully present (No withdrawing)	does not withdraw physically or emotionally, leaving the team and not actively participating. Instead, eyes, body, and comments always demonstrate full attention to the tasks and concerns of the team.
Sarcasm	Being courteous (No sarcasm)	does not make cutting or hurtful comments with the intent of shaming or ridiculing. Instead, says kind words that help members to feel a part of the team.
Ignoring	Being inclusive (No ignoring)	does not disregard the statements of another person. Instead, acknowledges any comments made by the members of the team.

SOURCE: Adapted in part from the work of NTL/Learning Resources Corporation (1976) in their publication, "Role Functions in a Group." Reprinted from *Six Pathways to Healthy Child Development and Academic Success: The Field Guide to Comer Schools in Action*, by James P. Comer, Edward T. Joyner, and Michael Ben-Avie. Reproduction authorized only for the local school site that has purchased this book. www.corwinpress.com.

The information in the feedback guides enables team members to have a common language (language pathway) for giving no-fault feedback. In addition, the guides help members address process issues and still remain respectful (ethical pathway) of one another. By using these guides to talk about their own processes, team members improve their work and strengthen their relationships with one another (social pathway). The process observer and, eventually, all team members can use these guides to help reflect and assess (process), give feedback on what is working or not working on their team, and then make specific changes to improve their work.

REFERENCES

- Bohm, D. (1992). *Thought as a system*. London: Routledge.
- NTL/Learning Resources Corporation. (1976). Role functions in a group. In J. W. Pfeiffer & J. E. Jones (Eds.), *The 1976 annual handbook for group facilitators*. La Jolla, CA: University Associates.
- Schutz, W. (1967). *Joy*. New York: Grove Press.
- Weinstein, G. (1970). *Toward humanistic education: A curriculum of affect*. New York: Praeger.

READ MORE ABOUT . . .

- For information on how the well-functioning of teams depends on an understanding of people's differences, see Chapter 12 in this volume, "It's All About Effective Relationships: Frameworks for Understanding Ourselves and Others."
- For information about feedback, see the discussion of the Jo-hari Window in Chapter 12 in this volume, "It's All About Effective Relationships: Frameworks for Understanding Ourselves and Others."