How I Interact With People

Introduction

This worksheet is designed to help you reflect about how you interact with others. Complete this worksheet by yourself, and then discuss your answers with your direct care worker or employer. These conversations can help you both better understand each other's preferences and tendencies.

A Few Things to Keep in Mind

- **Comfort Level:** It might take some time for both of you to feel comfortable discussing these topics, and that's perfectly okay.

- **Take Your Time:** There are many topics to think about and discuss, but you don't have to do them all at once. Go through them at your own pace.

- **Similarities and Differences:** Don't assume that similarities are always good or that differences are negative. For example, if both of you like to take charge, you might have to figure out how to share leadership in certain situations. On the other hand, differences can complement each other—one person's strength might support the other's weakness.

- **Awareness and Adjustment:** Being aware of your differences can help you adjust your behavior in challenging situations. For example, if you learn that the other person struggles with making decisions, you might try to be more patient when they have a hard time making a choice.

- **Benefits Either Way:** Even if you don't have a conversation about this worksheet with the person you work with, just going through it on your

own can still be helpful. It can help you understand how others might think or act differently from you. That can give you insights into conflicts that come up.

Interaction Topics

Communication Style[1]

- Which style of communication do you use more often?
    - **Direct** (You say exactly what you're thinking)
    - **Indirect** (You choose your words carefully to avoid hurting other people's feelings)

    What situations might lead you to use a different style than what you typically do?

Assertiveness

- Are you someone who likes to take charge or are you more comfortable when someone else takes control?

- How do you feel about telling someone they did something wrong?

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[1] The "Understanding Our Differences" course explains the difference between direct and indirect communication in more detail.

Asking Questions

- How do you feel about asking questions when you don't understand something?

- How do you feel when someone asks you questions?

- What kinds of questions do you consider personal?

- Is it ever okay for someone to ask you personal questions?

Expressing Emotions

- Do you show your emotions, such as anger, happiness, sadness?

- How do you feel about other people showing their emotions?

Interruptions

- What are your thoughts about interrupting someone who's talking?

- How do you feel about being interrupted when you're doing something?

Feedback

- Do you want feedback from the person you're working with?

- How comfortable are you with giving feedback to someone else?

Punctuality

- Do you pay close attention to time? Is punctuality important to you?

- How do you define "on time", "early", "late"?

Multi-Tasking

- How do you feel about doing more than one thing at a time?

- How do you feel about <u>other</u> people doing more than one thing at a time?

Making Decisions

- Do you tend to make decisions quickly or take your time?

- Do you prefer to make decisions on your own or do you like getting input from others?

Uncertainty

- Do you prefer routine and predictability, or do you enjoy new and different experiences?

- How do you feel about rules? Should they always be followed, or are exceptions sometimes appropriate?

Authority

- Is it okay to disagree with a person in a position of authority?

Gender Roles

- Do you believe certain tasks should only be done by a specific gender?

Dealing With Change

- How do you feel about change? Is it fairly easy for you to adapt, or do you find it stressful?

Meaning of Yes

- When you say "yes", does it mean "I understand," "I heard you," "I agree with you," or "I will do what you asked"?

- Could saying "yes" ever mean that you don't agree with someone but don't want to say "no" to avoid hurting their feelings?

Personal Space

- What do you think is an appropriate distance for two people to stand apart when talking?

Touch

- Is it common or appropriate to touch someone on the shoulder or hold their hand while talking?

Eye Contact

- Do you think direct eye contact is respectful or disrespectful?