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### Reflection Paper #3- Self-Disclosure

Relationships are supported by the sharing of internal thoughts, likes and dislikes, wants and desires, opinions, and philosophies or views of life of people who interact. This is called self-disclosure. Each of these that we possess, if held deep inside our brain, will never be seen by another soul on earth. That is our own personal territory and makes us who we are.

If we choose to share all of our internal feelings, we open ourselves for criticism and judgement from other people. Negative criticism can hurt and encourage people to avoid sharing their feelings again in the future. Positive criticism can make a person feel good. The more good a person feels disclosing their thoughts to another, the more trusting he/she feels about disclosing deeper and more personal information.

It is also wise to be accepting of criticism rather than on the defense because it proves that one is analyzing situations to base their opinions off of. By accepting criticism one also can have a legitimate reason for changing one's opinion.

In class, we were asked whether we thought adults or children are better at disclosing their personal thoughts. I believe that it all depends on the individual being examined, but I tend to think that adults are better, because I feel it is a learned process. When we meet a new person, with them we test the security of our least important thoughts and feelings first. Gradually, we take it another step to see how deep we can go before we are betrayed. As adults, we can say that we have been doing this our entire life. With children who are still learning, I think that they are lacking an understanding of the world and are not quite ready to determine all the possible

dangers and risks of self-disclosure. Mothers and fathers tend to be the ones that children rely on the most, because they are the first ones to take care of every need. When I say it all depends on the person being examined, one could be worse off as an adult who has been betrayed so much that they no longer feel safe with it.

Self-disclosure is important in our world, especially when our leaders need to know how to appease the majority of the population examined. These leaders can be in politics, the work force, or a group that determines how things are going to operate. Ballot voting is a way that a person can communicate their feelings without self-disclosure identifying them, but with self-disclosure and discussion, the views of others can be changed. People may relate to another's opinion never thought of in a certain way, and may go back and start re-weighing their own morals and values. People could lose respect easier when they don't understand a reasoning behind another's actions. The situation in the Middle East is an example of this.

Many people in the Arab nations do not understand our actions because they are not being relayed information about our thoughts properly. Lack of communication can cause people to act in haste, and I feel a good definition of terrorism is to act violently in haste from a lack of communication and understanding. It is also possible that the people misinformed may not be able to legally communicate which is a serious problem.

The text points out that benefits of self-disclosure are increased accuracy in communication, reduction of stress, increased self-awareness, and stronger relationships.

The most important thing with accuracy in the text is stating facts as well as opinions. I feel it is right because facts can be a culprit to blame opinions on. It also allows others to check with one to make sure that the facts that they are basing an opinion on is correct.

I feel reduction of stress does follow self-disclosure because anger is released in bits at a

time rather than one violent hasty action that can cause hurt. The video in class demonstrated how family members and friends were hurt by violent rage. It also showed how one can harm them self if they don't know how to vent their frustrations and feelings, for example the lady with an eating disorder. Food was the only thing that distracted her from the issues that bothered her. She needed the distraction because she didn't know how to communicate.

Self-awareness is something I talked about briefly already when I had said that self-disclosure is learned. As we become adults, we can better plan our actions and techniques that make it easier to communicate.

Stronger relationships is a given. Without self-disclosure, there is no human relations. One is as good as taking up space if they cannot function and interact with other people. We may have to deal with helping people to function in our society by gaining trust and helping them to self-disclose information.

We can regain lost trust through apologizing, forgiveness, constructive criticism, staying open with our own feelings, choosing the right time and place, be open to others, and look for nonverbal cues. I think the most important one is time and place. The last thing anyone wants is to be put on the spot. Waiting shows that you have concern for the other person's privacy and comfort. The nonverbal cues should let you know when a good or bad time is, and that takes practice.

Self-disclosure and everything related to good technique with self-disclosure takes practice. Some people are looking for tutors and a chance to practice but have no one to turn to, so we should take the time to find these people and get them included with society.

