Complaint/Feeling/Request

Use the Complaint/Feeling/Request (CFR) process as a communication tool to address issues/conflict through a one-on-one conversation. Introduce CFR when you sense that students need to give one another simple feedback. The process helps individuals bring up challenges and address concerns before they fester. CFR allows youth to explore their **Ways of Feeling** because it allows them to safely express their emotions about a situation. This activity was contributed by the <u>Voyageur Outward Bound School</u>.

Why This Matters

- Conflict is a healthy part of the group formation process.
- Teaching a conflict resolution process provides youth with the skills to resolve and learn from conflict.

Getting Started

- Initially, CFR is taught as a group activity (see How To Do It). Once the group is familiar with the process, it is most useful as an ongoing peer-to-peer conflict resolution tool (see Taking It Further).
- Print off and consider laminating the CFR At-a-Glance so youth have an accessible reminder of the CFR steps.

How To Do It

1) Explain that the group is going to practice a process for resolving conflict. Split up the group into pairs.

2) Have each pair establish who is giving and who is receiving the feedback.

3) Assign each pair a practice scenario. Feel free to come up with your own ideas for scenarios. Some potential scenarios are:

   - During a teambuilding game, Ben begins making negative comments about the activity ("We're never going to finish. This is stupid!") and Sarah starts to feel frustrated by Ben's attitude.

   - A couple days into a week-long camping trip, Grace has started to avoid doing dishes. Leah, her fellow camper, has noticed and feels angry about the situation.

   - During their after-school arts program, Gabe constantly interrupts other students in the program while they share their artwork to the group. Gabe's friend, Peter, notices what is happening and wants to talk to him about it.

4) Explain the steps of CFR:

   - **Complaint**: the person who is giving the feedback simply states their complaint or problem to a specific person (or the group as a whole); ex: "Jesse, my complaint is that you do not wipe off your shoes before walking inside the tent."

   - **Feeling**: the person who is giving the feedback then states how the action/complaint/problem makes them feel; ex: "It makes me feel angry because the tent floor gets dirty."

   - **Request**: the person who is giving the feedback then assertively requests their desire; ex: "Jesse, please use the rug to wipe off your shoes or take your shoes off before coming inside the tent." The person receiving the feedback responds with how they will address the concern; ex: "I hear your point Jesse, and I will make sure to wipe off my shoes before I come inside next time."

5) Before letting the pairs practice, have two adults model one of the scenarios.

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6) Give pairs at least ten minutes to practice. Have pairs pick a new scenario and switch who is giving and receiving feedback so they both get a chance to practice.

7) Debrief the experience with guided questions: How did it feel when you were giving feedback? How did it feel to receive feedback? Were you more comfortable in one role or the other? How could you become comfortable in both roles?

Take It Further

*   Continue to use CFR as a conflict resolution tool for one-on-one feedback.

*   Use this activity as a framework for a larger discussion on conflict resolution/management.

    *   Ask each youth in the group if they have ever been in a conflict before. Have a few share their experiences or share examples of situations when a conflict could arise.

    *   Is it OK to have conflicts? Can you respond however you want when you are in a conflict?

    *   What are other ways to address and resolve conflicts?

Examples: CFR At-a-Glance

Complaint

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> The person who is giving the feedback states how the action/complaint/problem makes them feel; ex: "It makes me feel angry because the tent floor gets dirty."

Request

> The person who is giving the feedback then assertively requests their desire; ex: "Jesse, please use the rug to wipe off your shoes or take your shoes off before coming inside."
>
> The person receiving the feedback responds with how they will address the concern; ex: "I hear your point Jesse, and I will make sure to wipe off my shoes before I come inside next time."