Communication in Personal Relationships

Chapter Ten
Focus Questions

• What is the typical process of friendship development?

• How do romantic relationships typically escalate and deteriorate?
Focus Questions

• What kinds of communication help sustain long-distance romances?

• To what extent are long-term romantic relationships equitable for women and men?

• What is the cycle of intimate partner abuse?
Understanding Personal Relationships

• Voluntary commitment between irreplaceable individuals

• Personal Relationships are influenced by:
  – Rules
  – Relationship dialectics
  – Surrounding contexts
  – Commitment
Features of Personal Relationships

• Uniqueness

• Commitment

• Relationship rules

• Affected by contexts
Relationship Dialectics

• Autonomy/connection

• Novelty/predictability

• Openness/closedness
How to Deal with Dialectical Tensions

- Neutralization
- Separation
- Segmentation
- Reframing
Stages of Friendship

Figure 10.1 THE STAGES OF FRIENDSHIP

- Waning friendship
- Stabilized friendship
- Nascent friendship
- Moving toward friendship
- Friendly relations
- Role-limited interaction
Three Stages of Romantic Relationships

Figure 10.2  The Evolution of Romantic Relationships
Escalating Romantic Relationships

- No interaction
- Invitational communication
- Explorational communication
- Intensifying communication
Escalating Romantic Relationships

• Revising communication
  – not part of escalation in all romantic relationships

• Intimate bonding

• Navigating
Greatest Influences on Attraction

• Proximity
  – physical nearness
  – Can be in person or in cyberspace

• Similarity
  – We are attracted to people similar to ourselves
  – matching hypothesis
Relationship Culture

• Nucleus of an established intimate relationship

• Developed over time

• Evolves throughout the life of the relationship
Relational Deterioration

- Intrapsychic processes
- Dyadic processes
- Social support processes
- Grave dressing processes
- Resurrection processes
Styles of Loving

- Eros
- Storge
- Ludus
- Mania
- Agape
- Pragma
Guidelines for Communicating in Personal Relationships

• Adapt communication to manage distance

• Ensure equity in family relationships
  – Equity theory
  – Psychological responsibility

• Avoid intimate partner violence

• Insist on safe sex
Summary

• Understanding personal relationships
• Features of personal relationships
• Relationship dialectics
• How to deal with dialectical tensions
Summary

- Stages of Friendship
- Three Stages of Romantic Relationships
- Relationship Culture
- Styles of Loving
- Guidelines for Communicating in Personal Relationships