

## MBATT LEVEL 3, DAY 2 AFTERNOON, BREAKOUT SESSION 1

### **BCF & SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND HISTORY SURVEY (TM)**

(FOR USE DURING THE *USING MINDFULNESS TO HELP COUPLES HEAL FROM SEXUAL BETRAYAL* PRESENTATION )



DIRECTIONS: (1) Read through the *Boundaried Communication Format (BCF)* handout., (2) briefly answer the selected questions from *The Sexual Attitudes and History Survey (TM)*, and (3) discuss together in group.

### *BOUNDARIED COMMUNICATION FORMAT(BCF)*

**Speaker:** Your primary goal is to let the other person know what your reality is in a respectful way. Your motivation is simple: to let the other person know your perspective at this moment. It is not to manipulate, control, or to prove that you are right or to convince him/her that yours is the correct perspective. You begin with a request, end with a request, and have three shares in the middle.

**1. REQUEST** time: “There is something I’d like to share with you- is now a good time?” If the answer is “yes” proceed to #2. If the answer is no, ask, “When do you think might be a better time?”

**2. SHARE** what happened: Set it up- what did you hear or see or experience that you’d like to share? (e.g. “When we were talking at the table you got up and left the room without saying anything and you had a look on your face.”)

**3. SHARE** your thoughts about what happened: What meaning did you give to what happened? (e.g. “What I made up in my mind is you were upset with me for some reason, but I’m not sure why. I also interpret that you don’t respect me when you leave like that.”)

**4. SHARE** the feelings you have in response to your thoughts: What emotions are/were you aware of? (e.g. “In response to that I have some fear that if you are upset with me, you will avoid me. I also have some pain and anger- pain because it feels like an old pattern being repeated again, and anger because that felt disrespectful to me.”)

**5. REQUEST** a preference that relates to what you have just shared: (e.g. “I’d prefer that you not leave so abruptly when we are talking. If you do need to leave, I’d prefer you letting me know that and telling me when you’ll be back.”)

**Note:** In Step 3, we highly recommend using phrases like, “What I made up about that was...” or “my interpretation of that was...” Using language like this allows you to take ownership of your reality while leaving plenty of room for your partner’s perspective. It will steer you clear of making negative assumptions and/or blaming your partner for “making” you feel a certain way.

**Note:** In Step 5, we recommend framing your requests as preferences as opposed to needs. The benefits are twofold: It keeps you in touch with your power to care for yourself while making requests. Also, many people hearing your request as a preference are less likely to be triggered into defensiveness or withdrawal.

## [BOUNDARIED COMMUNICATION FORMAT\(BCF\), CONT.](#)

**Receiver:** You have one primary goal when someone shares his/her reality with you: *Help that person feel understood.* You can do that by making eye contact, listening carefully, and not interrupting. You can remind yourself that s/he is trusting you by sharing thoughts, feelings and requests. You remind yourself that you are listening to find out where this person is at, and more about who s/he is. As you respect his/her reality, you also connect with your own reality. Use the following steps:

1. **RECOGNIZE** what s/he just shared by paraphrasing what you heard. Go as far as you can while remaining authentic. (e.g. "I can understand how you would be feeling those things since that was your experience of what happened.") (e.g. "It seems like XYZ is pretty important to you.")
2. **SHARE** your reality as it relates to what s/he has shared. Do you agree/relate with what you've heard or do you have a different perspective (or both)?\*\* (e.g. "I agree with part of what you've shared, but I had a different experience with part of it also. Would you like me to share my perspective?")
3. **RESPOND** to his/her request. Look for any part you can say "yes" to; be clear about:
  - a. what you are agreeing to or cannot agree to, or
  - b. if you would like some time to consider the request, or
  - c. if you would like some clarification or more information.
  - d. if you would like to offer clarification relative to what your partner experienced

**EXAMPLE A:** "I can certainly agree to be more aware of how my leaving the room affects you and I can definitely commit to letting you know when I need to leave the room in the future."

**EXAMPLE B:** "I heard your request about not leaving the room so abruptly. I really want to work with you on this, but can I have a little more time to think it through and then get back to you?"

**EXAMPLE C:** "I'm not sure what you meant when you said I had a look on my face, but I want to understand – can you please say a little more about what kind of look it was?"

**EXAMPLE D:** "I have some clarification that might be helpful, would you mind if I shared it? I don't think you knew this, but I had missed two calls from Doug already and then while we were at the table I heard my phone buzzing in the other room and I didn't want it to go to voicemail so that's why I left so quickly and probably why I had a look on my face. But the look and the leaving was not about you, in fact I had been feeling very good about you and I'm sorry that the way I left the room created the opposite impression. As for your request..."

\*\*Do not disagree with your partner's feelings (e.g. "You shouldn't be so upset about this."), as they belong to your partner. Also, when you recall things differently, do not say, "That's not what happened." Instead say, "I had a different experience than what you described...is it ok to share my experience?"

SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND HISTORY SURVEY (TM).

1. The messages I received in my childhood home about sexuality were:

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2. The information I received in my childhood home about sexuality was:

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3. My parents showed affection to each other by:

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4. When my body started developing sexually, I felt:

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5. How did you feel about your sexuality growing up and what was most influential?

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6. What did you learn from your childhood peers about sex and sexuality?

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SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND HISTORY SURVEY (TM), CONT.

7. How did you feel about yourself after becoming sexually active?

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8. How do you currently feel about your sexuality? Does it differ from how you would like to feel?

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9. What would you say have been some of the most influential factors that have promoted a healthy sense of your sexual self?

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10. Which factors represent unwanted sexual baggage and have negatively impacted your sexual self?

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