



## MODULE 2

# Relational Dynamics

# Module 2 – Relational Dynamics and the WE Space

## Course Content

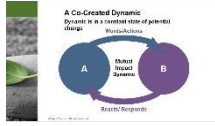
### **Topic 1 - Understanding Relational Dynamics**

Lesson 1 - Co-Created Mutual Impact Dynamic  
Lesson 2 - Quick Overview Relational Dynamics

### **TOPIC 2 - Positive Impact of Empathy and the WE Space**

Lesson 1 - We Space Defined  
Lesson 2 - Practice Exercise: My Phone Broke - Impact of Non-Empathic Response  
Lesson 3 - Conclusion & Review – Relational Dynamics & the WE Space

## MODULE 2 – Relational Dynamics and the WE Space



### TOPIC 1: Lesson 1 – Co-Created Mutual Impact Dynamic

#### REVIEW – Relational Dynamics

The term “Relational Dynamics” describes the nature and quality of a relationship between two people, which largely depends on their co-created “Mutual Impact Dynamic.” This topic will be introduced by exploring three concepts;

- Mutual Impact Dynamics
- Co-Creation
- We Space

The objective is to demonstrate how greater empathy fundamentally improves a relationship. The focus will be on helping you have more positive outcomes personally and professionally.



#### Defining the Term “Relationship” – A Co-Created Dynamic

A relational dynamic consisting of the psychological/emotional connection between two people focusing on how the individuals impact each other in their interactions.

Consciously or unconsciously we are nearly always being impacted by the “other” to some degree. As a result, we typically have a reaction/response to how we are impacted that may be positive, negative or neutral. We call this the “YUM,” “YUCK” or “HMM” response.

#### **YUM** – Positive Reaction/Response

(Simply stated means your initial feeling is that you like the person and their actions and you are positively impacted.)

#### **YUCK** – Negative Reaction/Response

(Your initial feeling is that you do not like the person or their actions and are negatively impacted.)

#### **HMM** – Undecided Reaction/Response

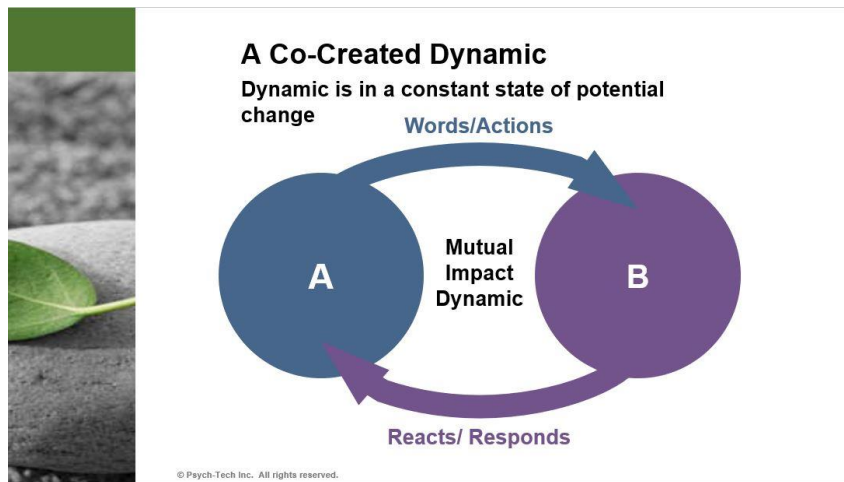
(You have not made up your mind how you feel about the person or their actions, or how you are being impacted.)

## PERSONAL REFLECTION – Self-Attunement

**Coaching Note** Allowing yourself to pause and tune in to how you are feeling is a form of self-attunement, an important aspect of your **relationship with yourself**.

1. **What is your current self-state?** In this moment, can you reflect on what you are thinking and feeling? Is there anything distracting you, any physical sensation, emotional upset, fears, concerns or anxiety? Take time to tune in to yourself as much as possible.
2. If you got in touch with any negative feelings, how do you typically manage these feelings?

## Co-Created Dynamic Defined



A co-created, mutual impact dynamic, i.e., “A” says or does something that impacts “B,” producing a reaction and response by “B,” which in turn causes “A” to react & respond. **This reaction-response can be either positive or negative.**

Thus, “A” & “B” constitute a dynamic system, meaning **how they impact each other is in a constant state of potential change.**

**Each person has some choice in how they react and respond in the moment.** For example, **what** they say and **how** they say it. In this way, each person shares some of the responsibility for the relational dynamic.

## THOUGHTFUL Q&A – Mutual Impact Dynamic

1. The concept of the Mutual Impact Dynamic includes which of the following? (Select correct answers.)

- The impact two people have on each other is in a constant state of potential change.
- Each person shares some responsibility for the relational dynamic.
- Their reaction/response dynamic can be either positive or negative.
- In a relationship there is always a “saint” and a “sinner”.
- Each person has some choice in how they react/respond in the moment.

### HINT

This question has 4 correct answers.

## Lesson 2 – Quick Overview Relational Dynamics

### REVIEW – Relational Dynamics

**Negative Impact of Sympathy and Pity** – As we discussed in Module 1, a pitying or sympathetic response, though well intended could cause the other person to feel dismissed, diminished, judged or angry.

**Empathic Inquiry** – Seeking to understand the “what” & “why” of the other’s inner experience and inquiring about their feelings has the potential to change the relational dynamic positively by helping the other feel understood and more connected.

**WE Space®** – A qualitative shift in feeling between two people where each person feels safe, seen, respected and understood by the other. It results in a positive, relaxed, trusting connection that can often be **communicated nonverbally** (eye contact, touch, voice quality and intonation, body language, facial expression and response timing).

This mutually created dynamic of feeling safe, understood and positively connected with the other can be very fleeting and fragile. (A concept we will discuss in depth later.)

**Relational Dynamics are Co-Created** – Because we all have behavioral choices, we assert that relational dynamics are co-created.

Four steps to help you participate in creating a more positive relational dynamic.

1. Ask, are you aware of your initial “Yum” “Yuck” reaction in the moment of interaction?
2. Is your reaction/response habitual & unconscious to how you have been impacted?
3. Try to slow down your habitual response process as you become aware of your feeling reaction in the moment.
4. Reflect on the interaction and the impact you may be having on the other. Try to make a more positive conscious response.

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

## TOPIC 2 – POSITIVE IMPACT OF EMPATHY AND THE WE SPACE



### TOPIC 2/Lesson 1 – We Space Defined

#### REVIEW

1. The **WE Space** exists when there is **mutual respect** and **positive regard** for each other, accompanied by a sense of **emotional safety** and **understanding**, with **little fear of being used, shamed, humiliated, or unfairly criticized** by the other. This includes an intuitive understanding of the “what” and “why” of each other’s feelings and inner experience.
2. The **WE Space** is recognizable by a qualitative shift in feeling between two people. A positive, relaxed, trusting connection that can often be communicated nonverbally (eye contact, touch, voice quality and intonation, body language, facial expression and response timing).

3. Ideally, a **WE Space** is first experienced in infancy as part of a healthy attachment with parents with the infant feeling wanted, valued and respected, and the adult feeling calm and safe. As adults, operating in a WE Space fosters greater creativity, cooperation, synergy and productivity in the relationship, both personal and professional.

**Coaching Note** Write a response to the following scenario as requested, keeping in mind the impact on the recipient of each of these pro-social responses – Pity/Sympathy/Empathy.

### PRACTICE EXERCISE – Empathic Response

**Scenario:** Bev confides in you that she wants to drop her friend Sue because she never reaches out to initiate getting together, and always seems to sit and wait to be invited... “I’m just sick and tired of always having to put myself out there first. I don’t even know if she really likes me or not but is just humoring me because she doesn’t want to hurt my feelings! Then I start to think of myself as a social hanger-on!”

1. What is your **Pity** Response to the above scenario?

**HINT**

**Pity** can have a negative impact on the recipient, as the observer may feel sorry for the recipient and respond from an **emotional distance (far)** that may reflect some **personal judgement** about the recipient.

2. What is your **Sympathy** response to the above scenario?

**HINT**

**Sympathy** is potentially projecting your feelings of caring and concerns onto the other, with possible **emotional merger** between the observer and recipient that often results in taking some action on the other’s behalf.

3. What is your **Empathy** Response to the above scenario??

**HINT**

**Empathy** is tuning into the “what” and “why” of the other’s actual feelings without projecting ones’ own feelings, or emotional merger.

**Empathy** includes mirroring the other’s positive & negative inner experience, as well as their natural strengths and sense of agency.

## Lesson 2 – Practice Exercise: My Phone Broke – Impact of Non-Empathic Response

### PRACTICE EXERCISE – My Phone Broke (Impact of Non-Empathic Response)

After watching this video assess the following;

1. How is Jane impacting Tom?
  - Positively
  - Negatively
2. What informs you that Jane is impacting Tom in that way?
3. How is Tom impacting Jane?
  - Positively
  - Negatively
4. What informs you that Tom is impacting Jane in that way?
5. What do you sense Tom is feeling?
6. What is your guess as to why Tom is feeling that way?
7. What do you sense Jane is feeling?
8. What is your guess as to why Jane is feeling that way?
9. Have Jane & Tom created a WE Space?
  - Yes
  - No
10. What most informs your assessment?
  - Tone of voice
  - Words spoken
  - Body language



## HINT

### Helpful Hint – Relational Dynamic Analysis

#### Feeling Analysis

- Observe Jane’s facial expression, tone of voice, words spoken...
- Observe Tom’s diagnostic response...

#### Yum, Yuck, Hmm Analysis

- Observe Tom’s “Hmm” response...
- Observe Jane’s “Yuck” response to Tom’s apparent lack of caring...

#### WE Space Analysis

- Unconscious hurt and resentment could taint future interactions.
- Remedy by sharing respective feelings.

#### Mutual Impact Analysis

- Tom’s apparent lack of concern for Jane’s upset impacts her negatively.
- Jane’s hurt response causes Tom to withdraw.

### Practice Exercise – My Phone Broke (Impact of Empathic Response)

After watching this video assess the following;

1. How is Jane impacting Tom?
  - Positively
  - Negatively
2. What informs you that Jane is impacting Tom in that way?
3. How is Tom impacting Jane?
  - Positively
  - Negatively
4. What informs you that Tom is impacting Jane in that way?
5. What do you sense Tom is feeling?

6. What is your guess as to why Tom is feeling that way?
7. What do you sense Jane is feeling?
8. What is your guess as to why Jane is feeling that way?
9. Have Jane & Tom created a WE Space?
  - Yes
  - No
10. What most informs your assessment?
  - Tone of voice
  - Words spoken
  - Body language

#### **HINT**

#### **Helpful Hint – Relational Dynamic Analysis**

##### **Feeling Analysis**

- Observe Tom's concerned response...
- Observe Jane's facial expression, tone of voice and words spoken as she relaxes...

##### **Yum, Yuck, Hmm Analysis**

- Observe Tom's sincere desire to understand Jane's upset and inner experience...
- Observe Jane's positive response to Tom's caring & respect for her feelings...

##### **WE Space Analysis**

- Observe Jane's shift in self-state as she starts to feel emotionally safe with no concern of being shamed, humiliated or ridiculed.
- As empathic resonance deepens Tom can begin to find a solution.

##### **Mutual Impact Analysis**

- Tom's respectful and caring response impacts Jane positively.
- Jane's upset is calmed as their positive and productive connection deepens.



## Personal Reflection – Yum, Yuck, Hmm

---

1. Think of 3 people you have a “Yum” reaction/response to.
2. Think of 3 people you have a “Yuck” reaction/response to.
3. Reflect on your “Yum” group.
4. Do you recognize a WE Space in any of your “Yum” group?
5. Reflect on our “Yuck” group.
6. Can you objectively see the co-created aspect of the dynamic and honestly assess your contribution?
7. Can you think of a different reaction/response that may have affected a more positive outcome.

## Lesson 3 – Conclusion & Review – Relational Dynamics & the WE Space

### REVIEW – Mutual Impact Dynamic

1. Humans have a natural desire to achieve empathic connections with others and to have happy, healthy and productive relationships which are vital to success in life.
2. All positive relationships contain aspects of empathic attunement.
3. Negative and unproductive relationships are often emotionally draining.
4. The concept of “**Mutual Impact Dynamic**” illustrates how **relationships are co-created** and how **reaction-response choices made in the moment can shift** and **instantly** help create or destroy a WE Space.
  - Typically, we are not aware of our impact on others, but are typically very aware of their impact on us.
  - Generally, we are not conscious of the habitual reaction-response choices we have in the moment.
5. Awareness of the mutual impact dynamic and attempting to tune in to the other’s inner feeling creates trust, resulting in greater harmony & synergy.
6. Mutual respect and emotional safety support empathic flow and the potential to create a WE Space.
7. Creating a co-operative dynamic is an essential element for effective interventions and positive outcomes when working with others both personally and professionally.

## THOUGHTFUL Q&A – Mutual Impact Dynamic

1. What is the WE Space?

**HINT**

Feeling understood and positively connected to another person.

2. What is the “Mutual Impact Dynamic”?

**HINT**

Individuals impact each other continually, resulting in a mutual reaction-response that is positive or negative to varying degrees.

3. How would you define the term “relationship”?

**HINT**

Relational dynamics are co-created.

4. What is “empathic inquiry”?

**HINT**

Seeking to understand the other’s inner experience.

5. Are you usually aware of your first reaction-response to others?

Yes

No

Sometimes

6. Are you usually able to slow down your reaction/response process and make a different and hopefully more positive choice in the moment if someone upsets you?

Yes

No

Sometimes

7. Can you think of an occasion when you contributed to the escalation of a negative dynamic with someone you really care about? Can you think of a different choice you may have made in the moment and imagine a different outcome?

8. What is your reaction-response to the above question?

- Yum
- Yuck
- Hmm

## Relational Dynamics & the WE Space

---

### REVIEW

#### Relational Dynamics

- We are generally unaware of the impact we have on others.
- “WE Space” can be created in any relational context, personal or professional and in new or existing relationships.
- We have a choice about how to respond to the other person in the moment. Slow your reaction-response down and try to imagine what the other person is feeling and why. Then see if you can consciously make a choice that will help create a positive outcome.
- Empathic Inquiry is an attempt to find out more about the other person’s inner experience and feelings. We will discuss this process in more depth in Module 3.
- An empathic response invites reciprocal empathic attunement and the potential for a synergistic WE Space.

#### Essential Elements of the WE Space

- **Positive regard** – The observer shows sincere interest and concern about the other’s “feelings & inner experience.”
- **Mutual respect** – The observer responds with respect to the other’s upset and inner experience.
- **Emotional safety** – The recipient feels no fear of being shamed or unfairly criticized
- **Empathic flow** – The observer’s empathic resonance calms the recipient’s self-state and deepens their positive connection.
- **Feeling Understood** – An intuitive understanding of the “what” & “why” of each other’s feelings & inner experience

#### Elements of an Empathically Attuned Connection

- Mirroring the other’s feeling accurately
- Meaningful eye contact
- Appropriate touch
- Voice quality & intonation
- Body language
- Thoughtful response timing

## FINAL EXAM – MODULE 2 – Relational Dynamics & the WE Space

**User Instruction:** This exam is scored and tabulated as part of the Course Final Exam. Each question has a value of 1 point. Questions can have more than one correct answer which will be identified in the question Hint. (12 questions)

1. **Question** - Which of the following statements are correct?

- Relationships are co-created due to the “mutual impact dynamic” and reaction-response choices made by both individuals.
- Typically, we are not aware of our impact on others, but are almost always aware of their impact on us.
- Generally, we are not conscious of the reaction-response choices we have in the moment.
- If we feel insulted or hurt, it is best to defend our perception of the other’s comment and not seek clarification.

### HINT

*This question has 3 correct answers to score 1 point.*

2. **Question** - Is the mutual impact dynamic static, or in a constant state of potential change?

- Static
- Constant change

3. **Question** - Do we have a choice in how we react to others?

- Yes
- No

4. **Question** - Do we have a choice in what we say & how we respond to others?

- Yes
- No

5. **Question** - Is an empathic response/connection always verbal?

- Yes
- No

6. **Question** - Match the correct reaction-response to the following definitions. (Keep in mind that the impact of all reaction-responses are a matter of degree.)

### Sort elements

a. YUCK

- b. YUM
- c. HMM

Your initial feeling is that you like the person and you have a positive reaction to him/her/situation.	
---	--

Your initial feeling is that you do not like the person and have a negative reaction to him/her/situation.	
--	--

You have not made up your mind how you feel about the person or the situation.	
--	--

**HINT**

*All three choices must be correct to score 1 point.*

7. **Question** - Using our explanation MATCH the correct definition and psychological impact on the recipient, to the following pro-social responses. (A definition may apply to more than one.)

**Sort elements**

- a. PITY
- b. EMPATHY
- c. SYMPATHY
- d. PITY & SYMPATHY

Can be experienced negatively as emotionally distant and judgmental.	
--	--

The observer can feel a strong emotional alignment, or sense of emotional merger with the recipient by projecting strong feelings of concern and a desire to take some action in their support.	
---	--

Can disempower the recipient by undermining their sense of agency.	
--	--

Embracing the full spectrum of emotional experience (both positive and negative) the observer tries not to project their own feelings, but to understand the “what” and “why” of the other’s inner experience and to mirror it back to them.	
--	--

**HINT**

*All four choices must be correct to score 1 point.*

8. **Question** - Which of the following are aspects of the WE Space?

- Positive Regard**– The observer shows sincere interest and concern about the other’s “feelings and inner experience”
- Mutual Respect**– The observer responds with respect to the other’s upset and inner experience.
- Emotional Safety**– The recipient feels little or no fear of being shamed or unfairly criticized.
- Emotional Merger**– The observer feels the recipient’s personal upset and concern to the point the observer is motivated to take action to rectify the situation for them.
- Empathic Flow**– The observer’s empathic resonance calms the recipient’s self-state and deepens their positive connection.

**HINT**

*This question has 4 correct answers to score 1 point.*

9. **Question** - Which of the following are essential elements in creating a WE Space?

- Positive regard
- Mutual respect
- Emotional safety
- Feeling understood
- Attempting to understand the “what” and “why” of the other persons feelings
- Taking some action to fix their issue
- Merging with the other person's feelings in an attempt to feel closer to them

**HINT** *This question has 5 correct answers to score 1 point.*



10. **Question** - Which of the following elements can help establish an empathically attuned connection?

- Mirroring feeling
- Meaningful eye contact
- Appropriate touch
- Voice quality & intonation
- Body language
- Constant advise giving
- Thoughtful response timing

**HINT** *This question has 6 correct answers to score 1 point.*

11. **Question** - How can we be more empathic when responding to others?

- Slow down your unconscious habitual & automatic reactions/response
- Be aware of projecting your own beliefs, perspectives and feelings
- Make a conscious attempt to respond in a positive and productive way
- Attempt to understand the “what” & “why” of the other’s inner experience by employing “empathic inquiry.”
- Mirror back the other’s strengths and personal agency
- Don't assume you know their feelings.
- Focus solely on a possible solution to their issue
- Reflect their anger or upset back to them as your own

**HINT** *This question has 6 correct answers to score 1 point.*

12. **Question** - A **sympathetic** or **pitying** response can have a negative impact on the recipient by contributing to their feeling which of the following?

- Disempowered
- Judged
- Emotionally distant
- Loss of personal agency
- Accurately understood

**HINT** *This question has 4 correct answers to score 1 point.*

