



Feedback Workbook

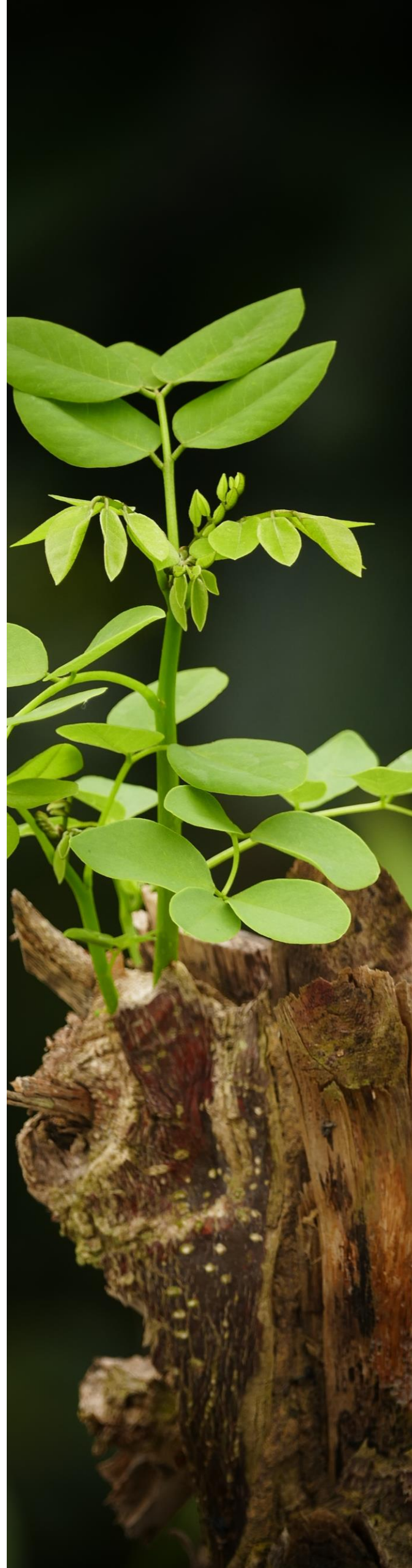
2023

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A FEEDBACK
CONVERSATION

INCLUDING: KEYS TO SUCCESS,
PREPARATION WORKSHEETS, A SCRIPT, AND
PRACTICE LOGS

Contents

- *Four Keys to Giving Effective Feedback*
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Four Keys to Giving Effective Feedback



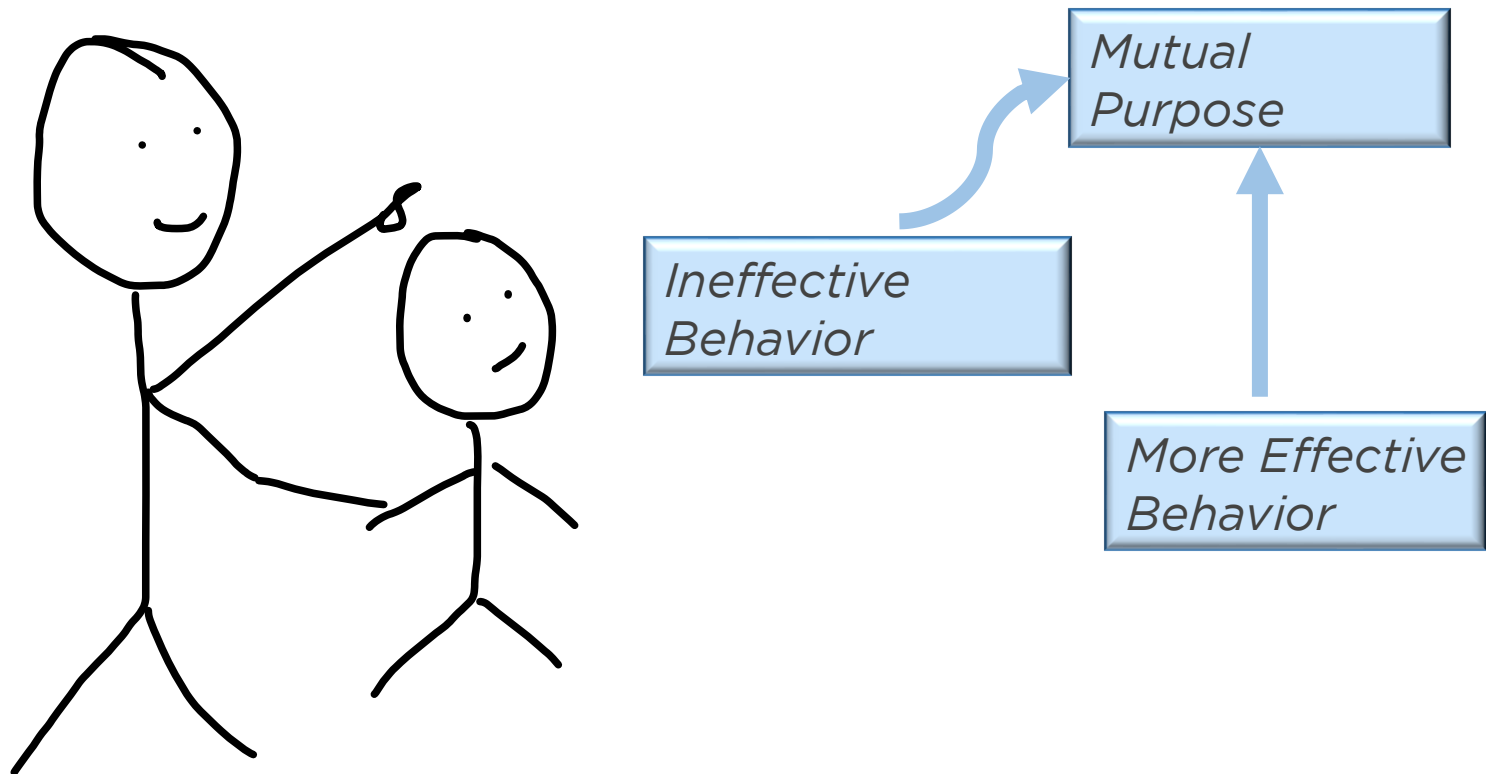
1. *Mutual Purpose*
2. *Positive Intention*
3. *Behaviors vs Characteristics*
4. *Clear Request*



Mutual Purpose

A feedback conversation can make us feel in conflict with each other.

When we give feedback within the context of our mutual purpose, we are simply evaluating which behaviors are more or less effective in getting us to what we both want.



Start preparing for any feedback conversation by thinking, what do we both want? Some common examples are:

- 1. As a boss giving feedback to an employee – we both want the employee to thrive, to be recognized for his or her hard work, to grow in his or her career.*
- 2. As a parent giving feedback to a child or teen – we both want the child to have fun, be safe, be healthy and strong, have trusting relationships.*
- 3. When giving feedback to a friend, spouse or colleague – we both want to be on a team that thrives, to have a trusting relationship, to enjoy our time together.*

Finding Mutual Purpose



In the table below, practice identifying mutual purpose with the people you work and live with. Try some specific examples related to arguments or power struggles you sometimes experience, and also come up with some broader ideas that could be applied to many situations.

I Want	You Want	We Both Want
<i>You to be here on time</i>	<i>To be appreciated</i>	<i>Your best work to be noticed and respected</i>
<i>To go out</i>	<i>To hang out at home</i>	<i>To enjoy our time together</i>
<i>To split up the tasks evenly</i>	<i>To split up the tasks according to people's strengths</i>	<i>Our team to succeed at the project</i>

Positive Intention

No matter what we say to another person, our words are only 10% of what we communicate. What we are feeling energetically shows up in our tone of voice and the nuances of our facial expressions. Our energy is infectious.

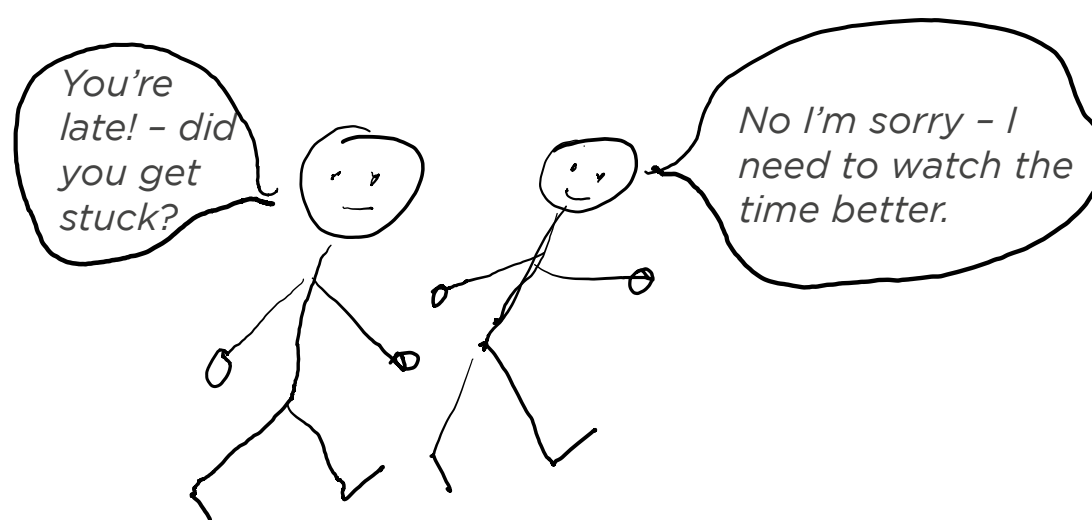
If you are frustrated, annoyed, intimidated by, hurt, or otherwise feeling negative about the person you are giving feedback to, they will feel the negative energy coming from you more than they will hear your words. And that's what they will react to.



Positive Intention is a technique we use to neutralize our energy so that we aren't putting out negative energy while giving feedback and our message is actually heard instead of reacted to.

Your negative feelings are not actually about the person - they are about the story you have in your head about what their behavior means.

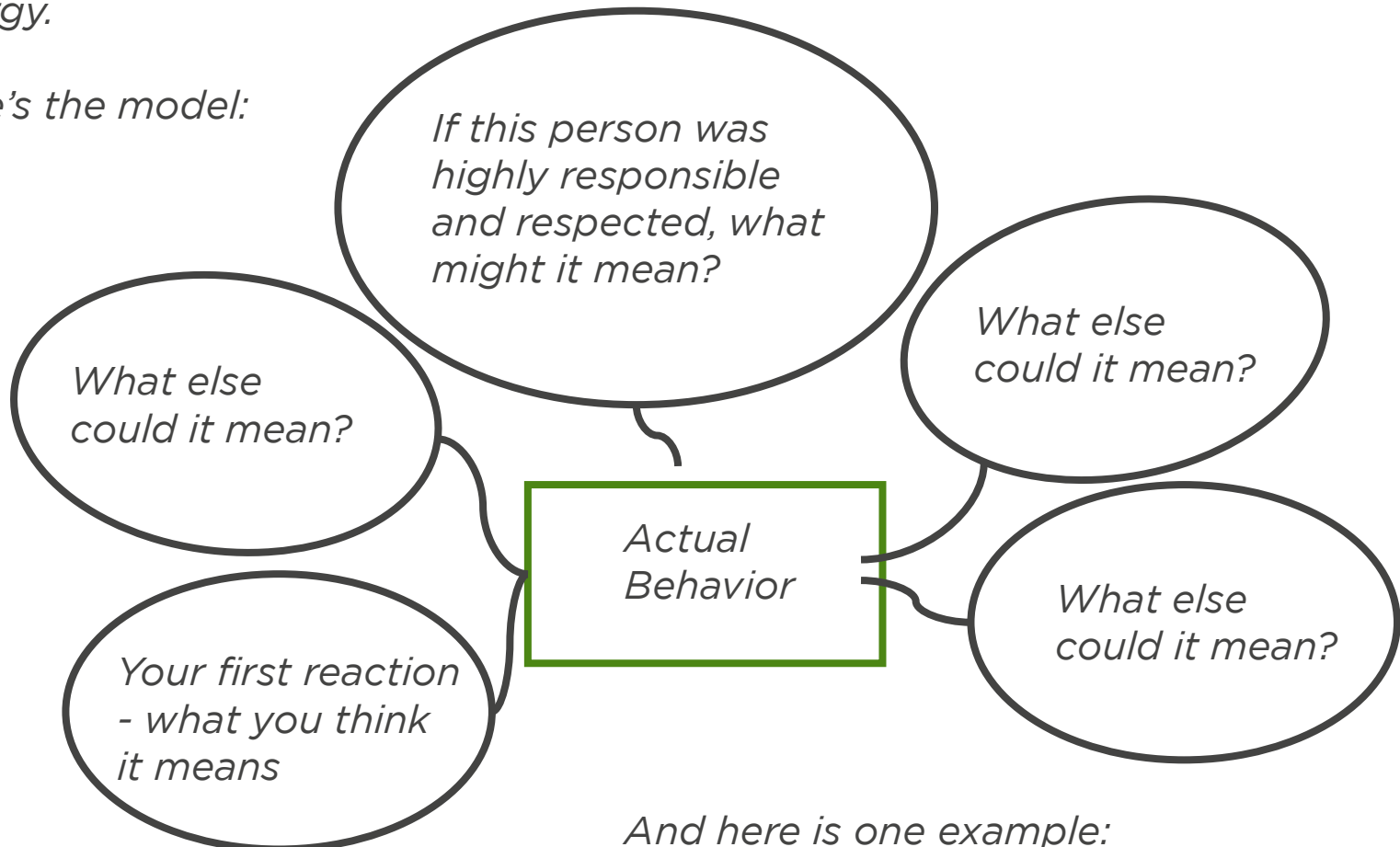
If you can imagine a possible positive reason why they exhibited the behavior that seems believable, you can use that to shift to neutral energy and be curious as opposed to negative during the conversation.



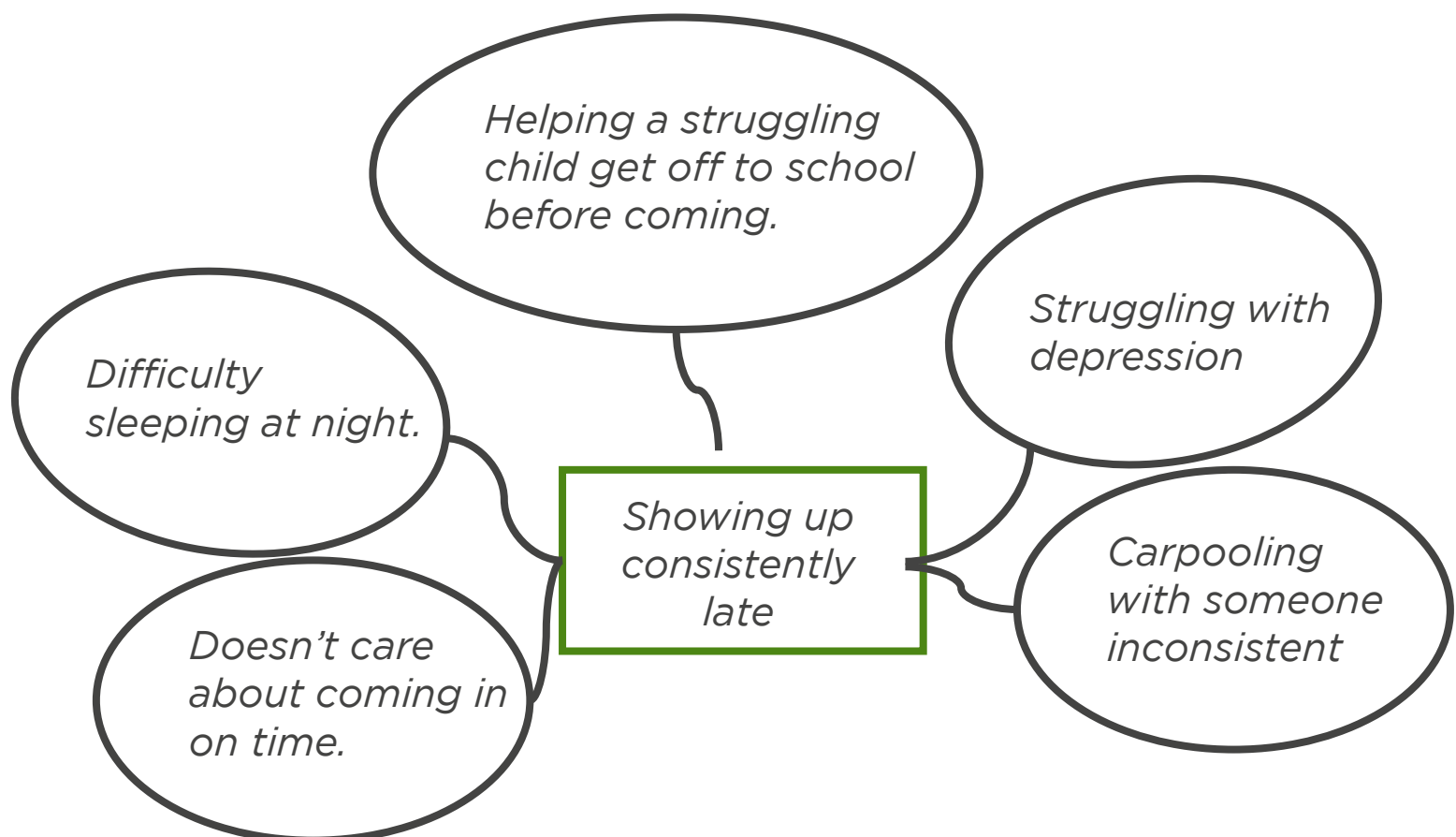
Finding a Positive Intention

Notice how your feelings and energy change as you consider vastly different interpretations of various behaviors. Here is a tool we use to help you explore possible positive intentions behind people's behaviors, and move to more neutral energy.

Here's the model:



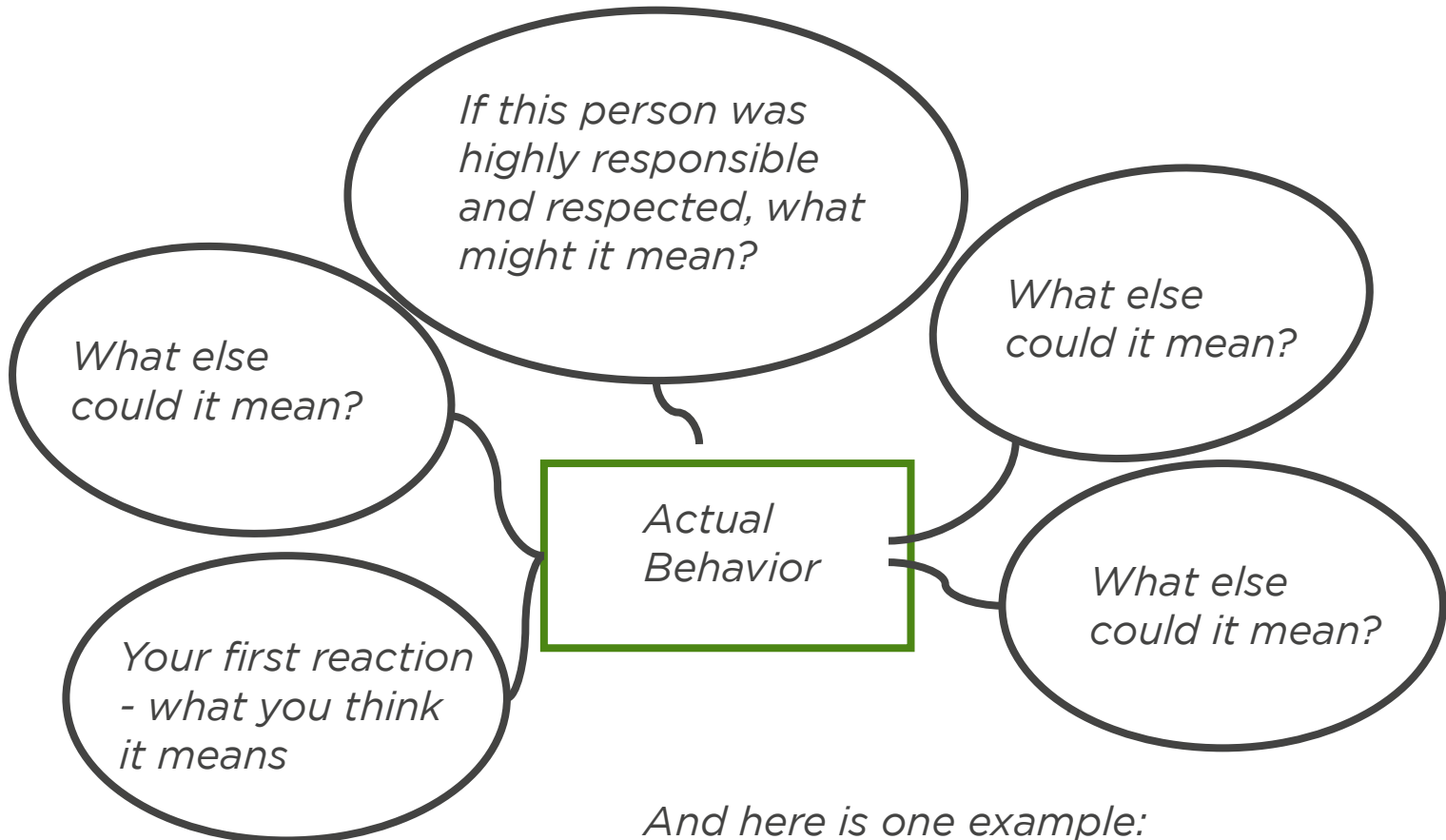
And here is one example:



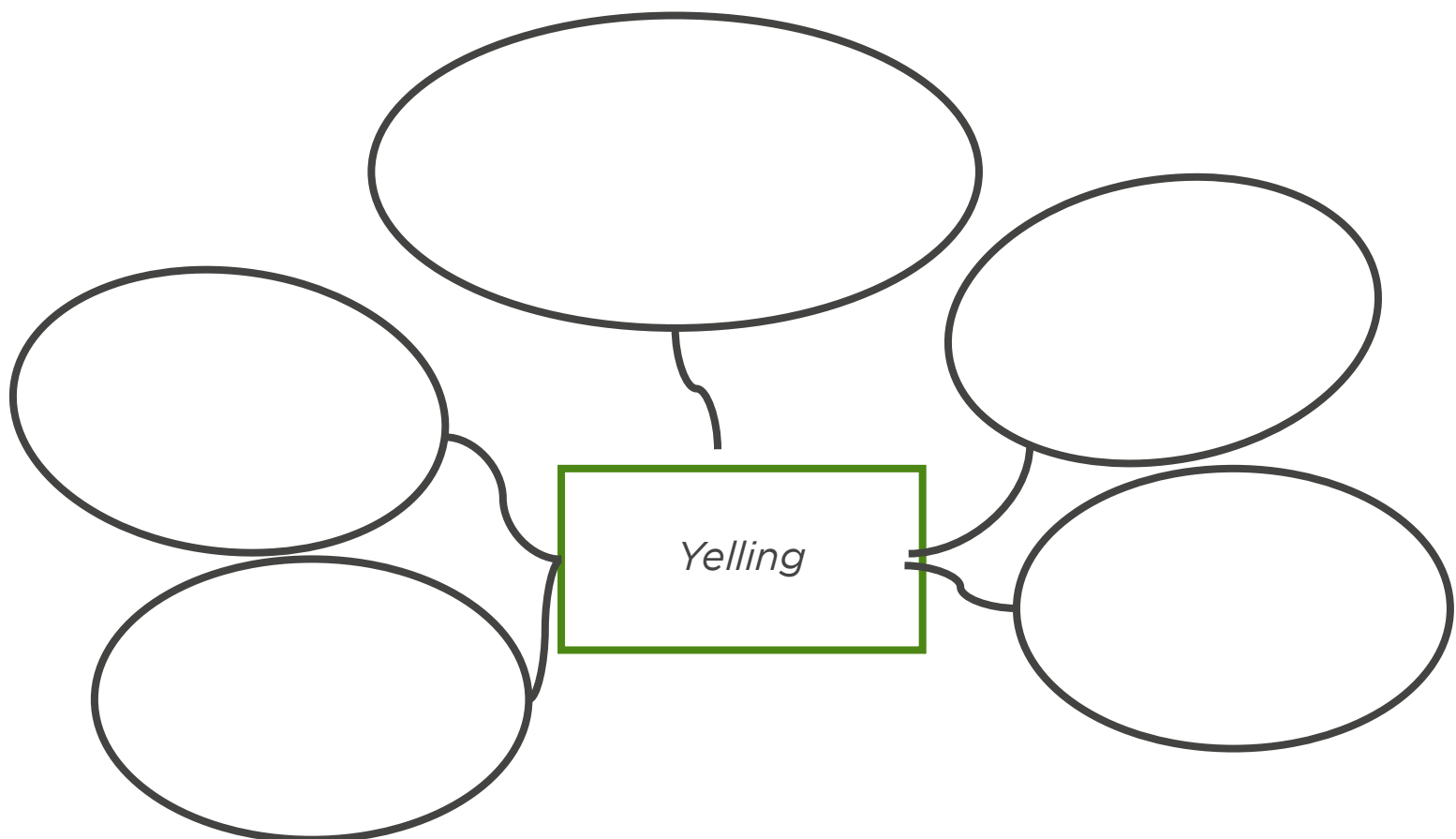
Finding a Positive Intention

Notice how your feelings and energy change as you consider vastly different interpretations of various behaviors. Try filling out the tool yourself with a different behavior pattern.

Here's the model for reference:

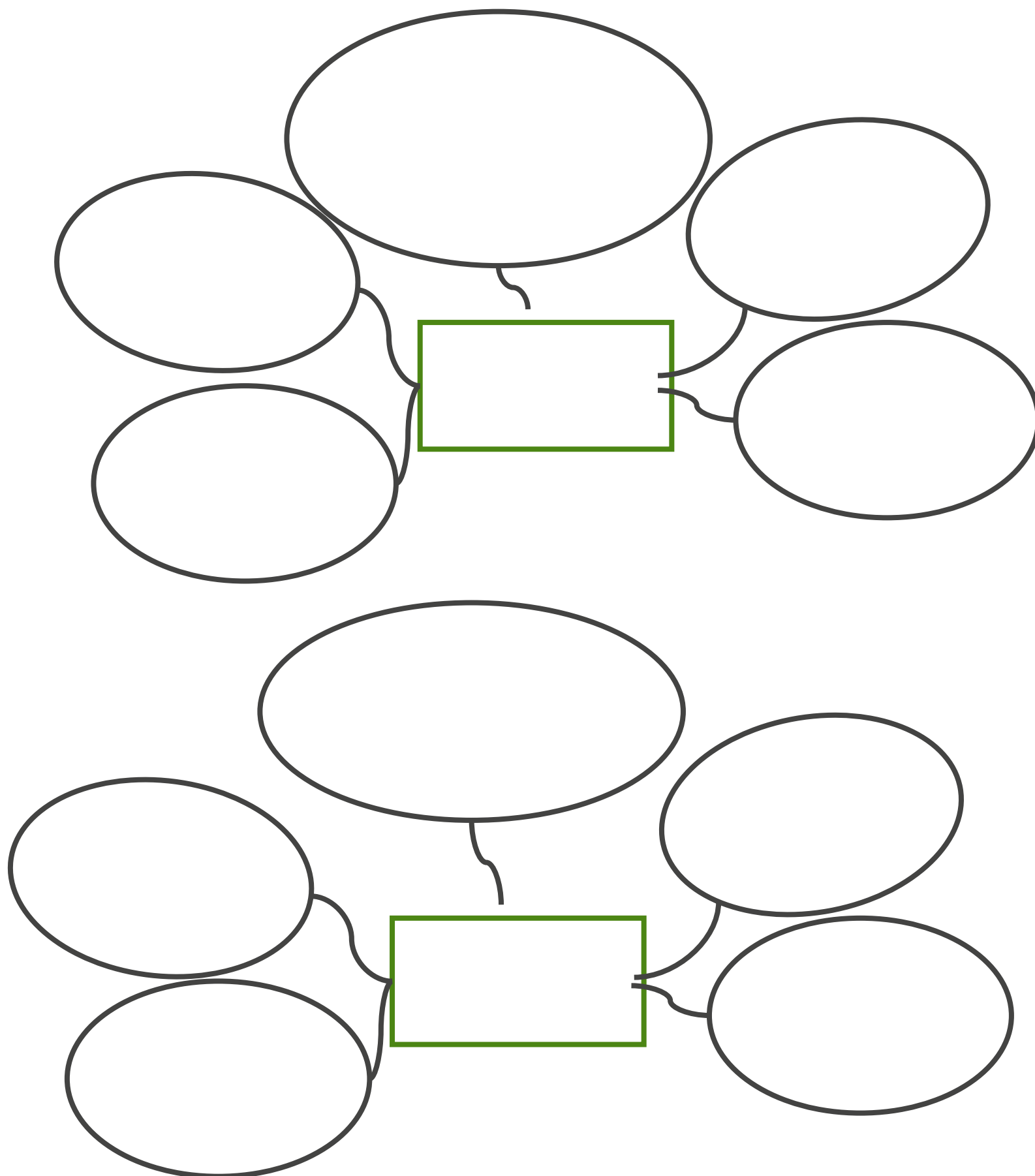


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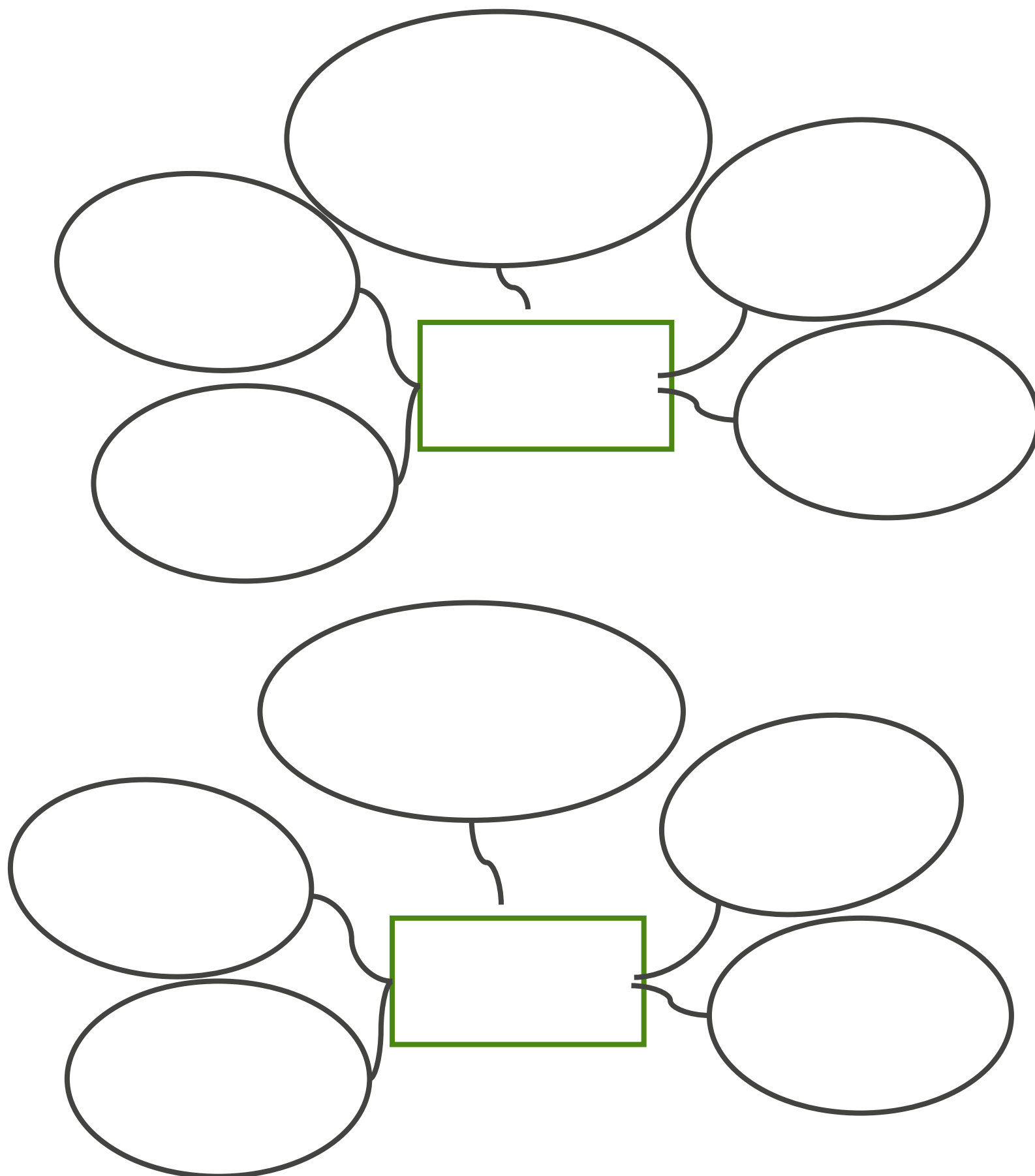
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Notice how your feelings and energy change as you consider vastly different interpretations of various behaviors. Here are some blank models for you to practice with. Pick situations that trigger you, and see if using the tool makes a difference.



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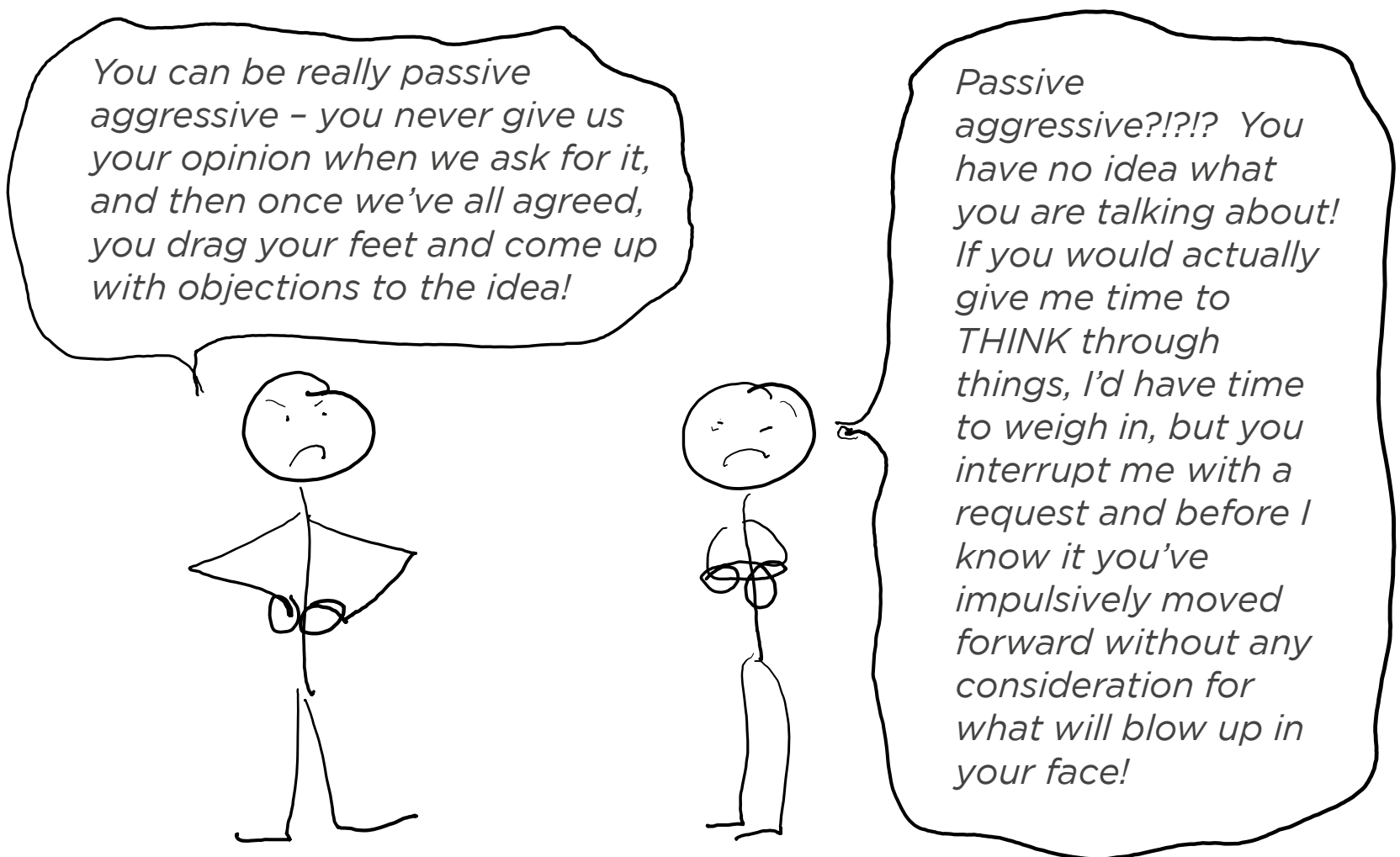


Behaviors vs Characteristics

Especially when you feel annoyed or frustrated by a person's behavior, your brain will automatically judge their character and describe them in derogatory terms. For example, the voice in your head might be exasperatedly calling them things like stupid, lazy, inconsiderate, immature, or political.

You probably instinctively know that if you confront the person using the words in your head, you will get a defensive response and it may even cause irreparable damage to the relationship.

This is one major reason why giving negative feedback feels challenging. Once the behavior starts to frustrate us, we've already started judging the person negatively, and we've lost our ability to provide feedback that seems honest but also inoffensive. Some people opt to be direct and risk the damage to the relationship, while others choose to be kind and risk over-softening the message. Neither of these approaches are very effective

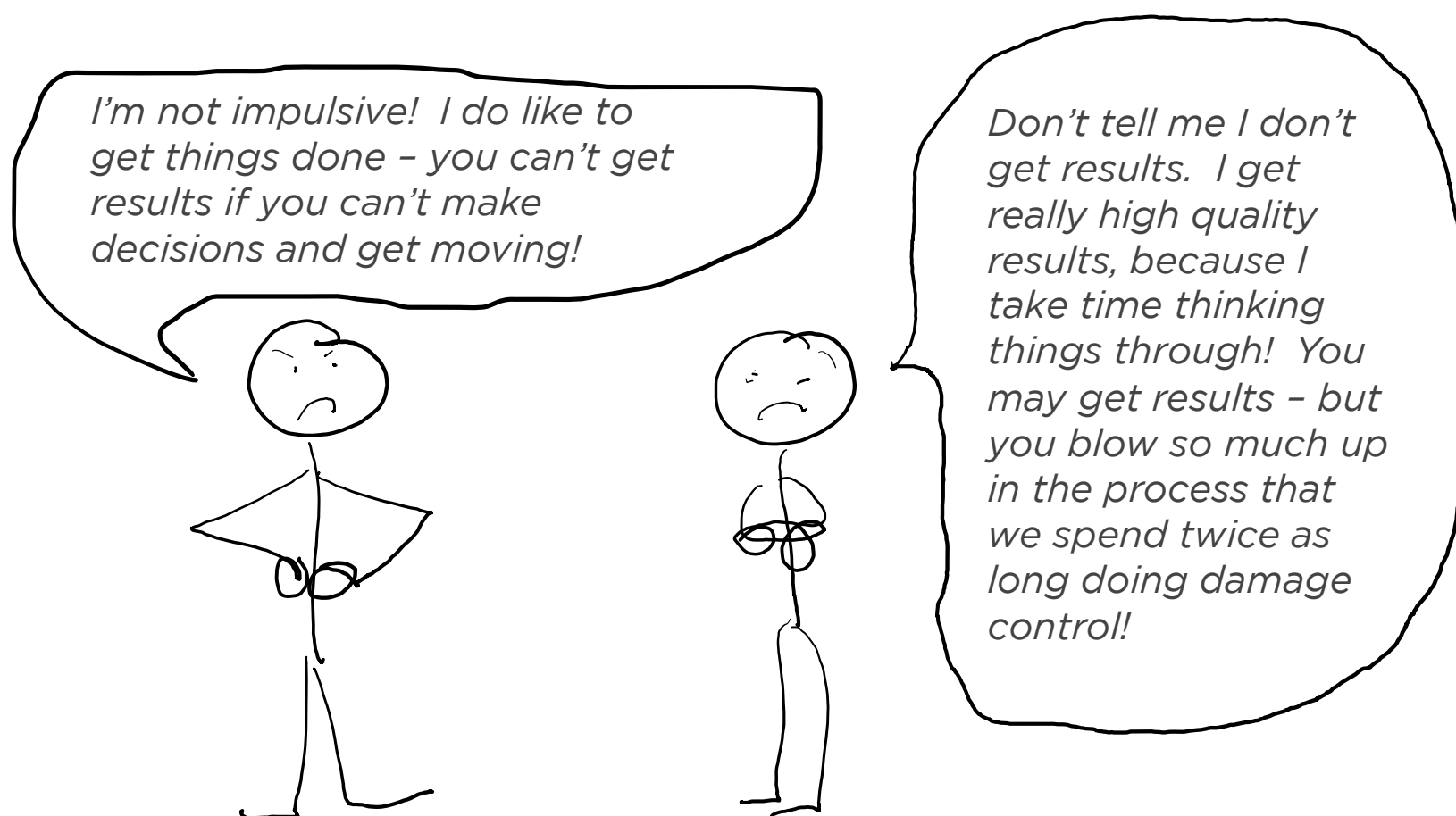


Behaviors vs Characteristics

Thinking of a believable positive intention behind the behavior is the first step to separating your perception from your frustrated judgments. The second step is to change the way you describe the behavior to yourself. To be accurate, only describe behaviors AS behaviors, and stay away from any words that convey negative judgment.

One easy way to do this is to stay away from any word that can follow the word “be” or “being”. Usually these are adjectives, like lazy, inconsiderate or political. This is one good way to catch yourself and force yourself to stay away from judgmental, or what I call “characteristic” words.

But there are other negative assertions I’ve heard clients make about colleagues that can be just as judgmental. One is “he doesn’t care about his job”. Another is “she is shutting us out”. No matter how “true” you believe these statements are, they are actually your mind blinding you with cognitive bias. When you make assumptions about what drives the behaviors of others, you are usually wrong, and this takes you very quickly to a place where you are adding to the problem, not taking away from it.



Behaviors vs Characteristics



Take a look at the table below. Imagine someone was giving you feedback. If they used the words in the left-hand column, how would you receive the feedback compared to if they used the words in the right-hand column?

The difference is the level of judgment conveyed in the words. If you can get yourself into a neutral frame of mind and then work to accurately describe behavior AS behavior, it opens you up to more effective conversation.

For practice, complete the table by thinking of people who pop into your mind as impulsive, political, or slow, and see if you can describe the behaviors that lead to those judgments in neutral terms.

Characteristics – Judgments about who you are PERSONAL, HURTFUL, AND NOT EASILY CHANGEABLE	Specific Behaviors – Observations about what you are doing NOT PERSONAL, NEUTRAL, AND EASILY CHANGEABLE
<i>Lazy and Unmotivated</i>	<i>Doesn't get work done on time or to standards</i>
<i>Rude and Inconsiderate</i>	<i>Interrupts and talks over others</i>
<i>Unprofessional</i>	<i>Dresses and talks in a more casual style</i>
<i>Immature and Childish</i>	<i>Reacts with strong emotion</i>
<i>Arrogant and Impatient</i>	<i>Stops listening, energy feels intense, tighter tone of voice</i>
<i>Unethical</i>	<i>Engaged in behaviors that don't seem to align with our values and standards</i>
<i>Impulsive</i>	
<i>Political</i>	
<i>Slow</i>	

Practice Worksheet



In the table below, write a brainstormed list of all the things other people do that frustrate, annoy, upset or hurt you. Then in the right-hand column, see if you can describe each behavior pattern in a neutral, non-judgmental way.

Things people do that frustrate or upset me	A non-judgmental way to describe this behavior pattern

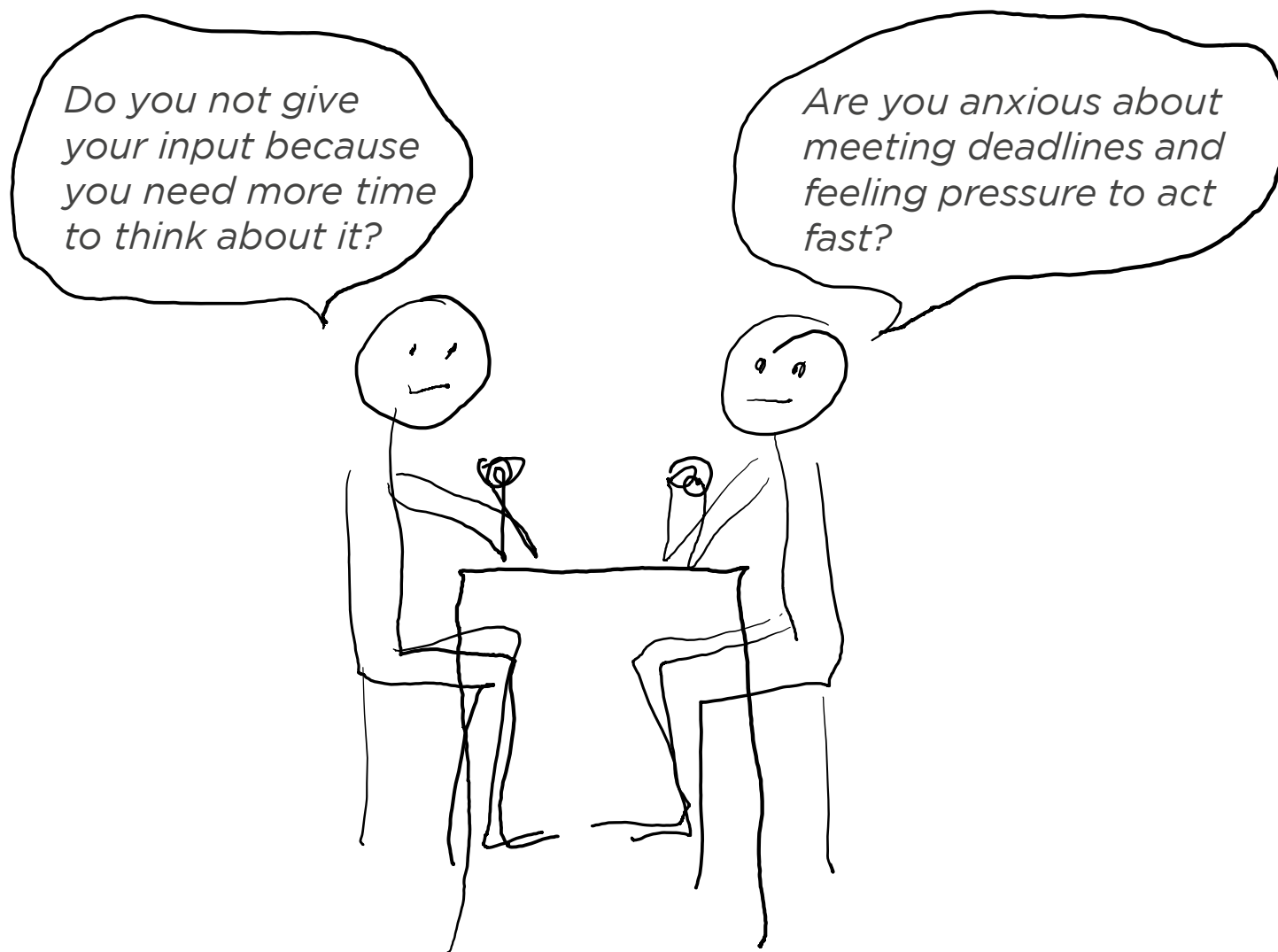
Getting to the “Why”

Keep in mind that all behaviors serve us in some way, even though they may not be serving us effectively. This is why it's so important to consider the positive intention. If we can understand what a person is trying to accomplish through their behavior, and we can give them a better way to accomplish it, they are more likely to change their behavior.

If they can't see a better option to get their underlying needs met, no matter how hard they try to change, they won't be able to.

Keep in mind that often people have several conflicting needs that they can't resolve and that is why their behavior is so ineffective. They may not be aware of all their motivations and may be working against themselves. While you may not be able to understand all of their motivations, doing the work to understand a few of them can lead to a more productive conversation and a better outcome.

People don't open up when they are braced for attack, so when trying to discover the “why” behind the behavior, sharing your guess about their positive intention conveys that you are giving them the benefit of doubt and it builds trust.

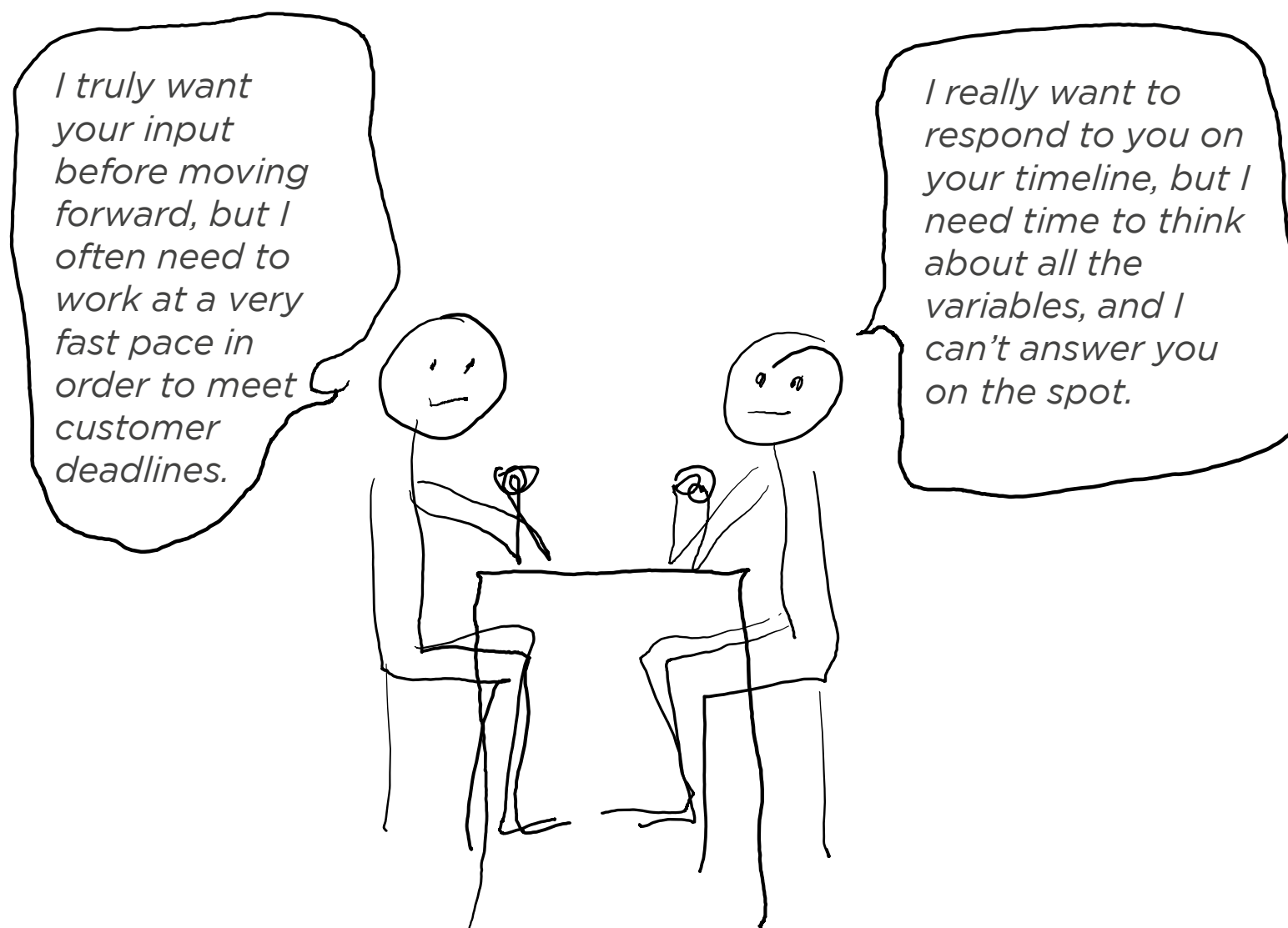


Getting to the “Why”

If you are willing to do the work to truly understand what the other person is trying to accomplish, and maybe where they are having challenges, then you have the ability to brainstorm on a solution that meets everyone’s needs – at least the ones that have been shared and heard.

Sometimes it helps to think of a feedback conversation as not one conversation, but a series of conversations. In the first conversation your only goal might be to listen and get a deeper understanding of what is behind the behavior without judging it.

You can still be clear that there are issues that you want to resolve, but when you take the time to learn more, it can help you move away from your negative assumptions and build an interactive space of mutual respect.

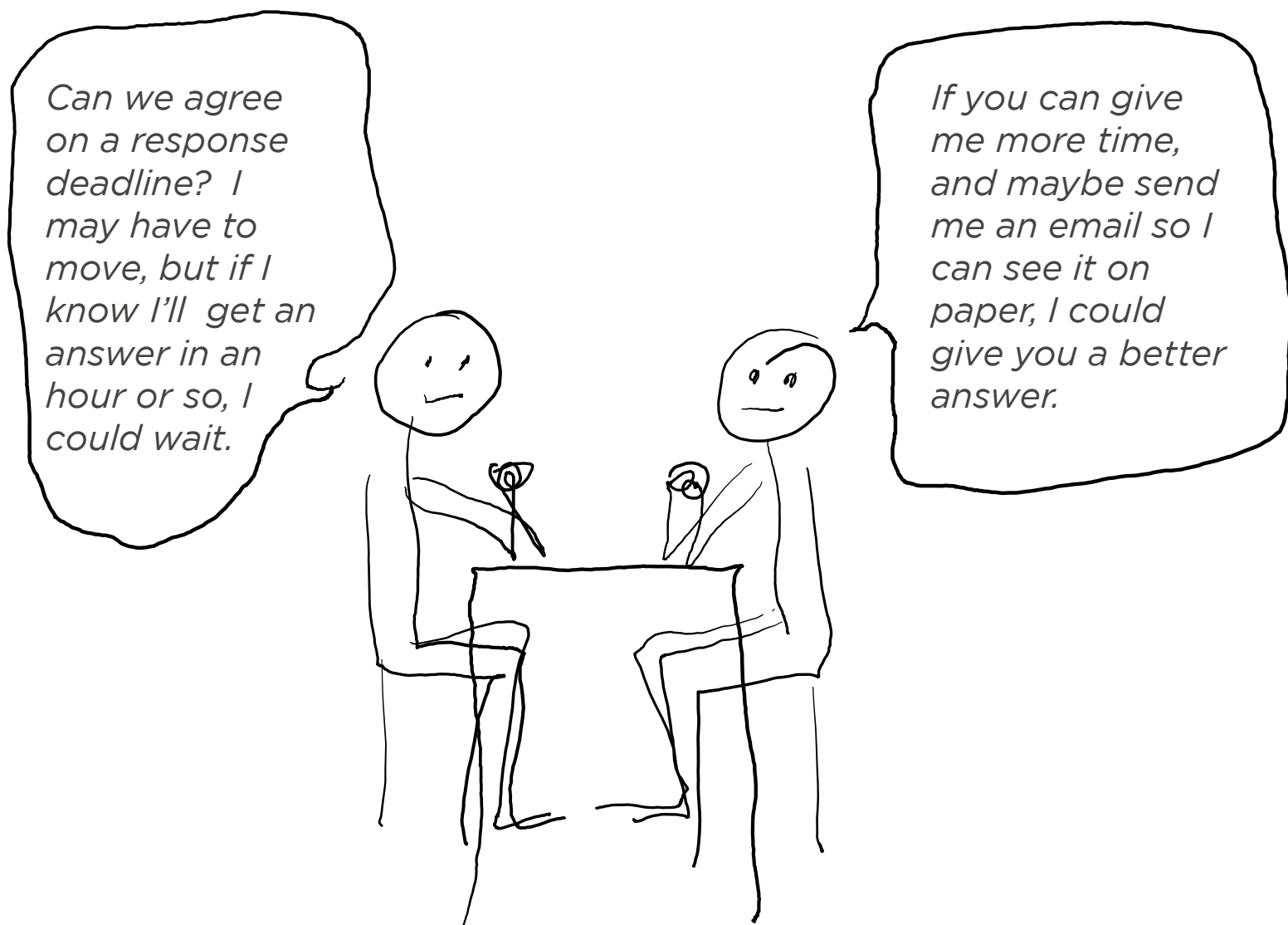


Clear Request

The main purpose of a feedback conversation is to facilitate a behavior change. Too often feedback conversations end in a promise to “try not to do that anymore”, without a new way to address whatever the older, less effective behavior was trying to accomplish in the first place.

When you have identified a mutual purpose and the positive intentions behind the behavior, then the conversation can become more of a solution finding brainstorming session on how you can more effectively accomplish everything that matters.

The best way to wrap up a feedback conversation is to agree to try a new behavior. It may also be useful to schedule a follow up conversation afterwards to see how things are working for both parties.



Feedback Preparation Worksheet



The worksheet below gives you an opportunity to prepare for a feedback conversation by thinking through the issues beforehand. It may seem like a lot of work, but we find that most of our clients only need to go through the process the first couple of times they have a conversation, and then they only use it for especially sensitive or high stakes conversations. We will give you an example first, with a common situation where an employee is showing up late for work.

Situation: An employee in your office consistently comes in late, and not only is it frustrating you, but other team members also notice and grumble about it. Otherwise his work is fine.

Mutual Purpose: For this employee to be recognized positively for his contributions.

Observed Behavior (no "being" behaviors)	Negative Impact of Observed Behavior	Possible Positive Intention Behind Observed Behavior	Requested Alternative Behavior	Probable Positive Impact of Requested Behavior
<i>Consistently arrives 10 to 30 minutes after the official start time.</i>	<i>Frustrates team members - gives the impression he is not pulling his weight (even if he is).</i>	<i>He may not see the lateness as an issue since he gets his work done on time, and sometimes answers emails and texts from home.</i>	<i>Come in on time or a few minutes before start time, no matter what.</i>	<i>Team will stop focusing on this one obvious behavior, and instead notice his more positive contributions.</i>

Once you have completed the feedback preparation worksheet, we have a template you can use as a script to help you work your way through the conversation. We'll show you how to do this on the next page.

Using the Script Template

Now that we have completed the feedback preparation chart, we can fit our responses into a script template as seen below.

Mutual Purpose: <i>For this employee to be recognized positively for his contributions.</i>				
A. Observed Behavior (no “being” behaviors)	B. Negative Impact of Observed Behavior	C. Possible Positive Intention Behind Observed Behavior	D. Requested Alternative Behavior	E. Probable Positive Impact of Requested Behavior
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Basic Script:

- 1. Mutual Purpose:** *We both want [mutual purpose] right?*
- 2. Positive Intention:** *I noticed [observed behavior] Was it because [possible positive intention].*
- 3. Getting to Why:** *Always listen and acknowledge whatever their intention actually was*
- 4. Share the Negative Impact:** *What you did makes sense, but whether you intended it or not, it also had this impact. [impact of negative behavior]*
- 5. Clear Request:** *If you do this instead [requested behavior] it will likely result in [probable positive result of requested behavior]*

And now filled in with the responses above:

“We both want you to be recognized for your positive contributions, right? (get agreement) I notice that you generally come in between 10 and 30 minutes after your official start time. Is it because this doesn’t seem important when you are getting your work done? “ Listen, acknowledge, reflect back. “I understand that in general, as long as a person gets his work done, the exact time he starts and stops doesn’t matter, however, we work on a team who all starts at a specific time, and when one person on the team starts later, it gives off the impression that they aren’t pulling their weight, whether they are or not. If you find a way to get here on time or even a few minutes early, it will take the attention off this more obvious behavior, and people will notice the positive contributions you make to the team. “

Practice Worksheet and Script



Here is a blank feedback worksheet for you to practice with:

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Developing your Skill

There are several ways to build towards having more effective feedback conversations, and your best path to development depends a lot on your current style and situation.

If you are more direct and sometimes confuse honesty with blurting out the first words that come into your head, then it might help to start by practicing listening and discovering positive intentions behind behaviors.

On the other hand, if you tend to avoid feedback conversations because you are worried about damaging relationships, you may want to start by practicing using the tools to give positive feedback on a more regular basis so that when it comes time to give negative feedback you feel more confident.

If you are already pretty comfortable giving feedback and the tools make sense to you, you might want to lean right in to pulling everything together and applying the skills to all of your conversations.

What follows is a worksheet to develop a personal plan, and some practice logs with reflection questions that will assist you in focusing on and leveling up this skill set, whatever your starting point.



Practice YOUR Way!

Reflection / Planning Questions



1. *What are the most difficult conversations for me to have?*
2. *Who are the most difficult people for me to have conversations with and why?*
3. *When I am most effective having difficult conversations what do I do well?*
4. *When I am least effective having difficult conversations where do I go wrong?*
5. *What is one important change that I would like to make in my approach to feedback conversations with others that will make a significant positive difference?*
6. *If I make this change, what will be different in my work and personal relationships?*
7. *Which concepts in this workbook will be most useful in helping me make this change?*
8. *What is one realistic thing that I can practice THIS WEEK to get me started?*

Feedback Practice Log



Situation	What I actually said and did	What went well?	What could improve?

Weekly Debrief Questions



1. *What did I plan to practice?*
2. *What went well with my practice?*
3. *Where could I improve?*
4. *What patterns did I notice?*
5. *What did I learn about myself?*
6. *What got in the way of my practice?*
7. *What do I want to focus on or practice next?*

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Feedback Practice Log



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Pulling it Together / Final Reflections



1. *What is the most important or valuable thing I got out of this workbook and my practices?*
2. *What do I want to carry forward with me?*
3. *What might get in my way?*
4. *What could I put into place to keep myself on track when I face obstacles?*
5. *Why is this work important to me?*