

## Directions for the If You Only Knew Technique (with Individuals)

### Warm Up

- Tell me briefly about the relationship/incident/situation with this other person/people.
- When did this happen? (*If this happened in childhood, ask how old s/he was at that time*).
- Where were you? Who else was there?
- (*If relevant*) Do you still see him/her/them...How often? What is that like for you?
- If the person is still around, how would you describe your relationship now?

### Serious Play: Depict the real-life situation

- Close your eyes and project yourself into this situation with this person. Go back to the first time you were hurt by this person. Really be there. Get a sense of the overall picture.
- Choose a figure to represent you.
- Place it on the template in the upper left box. Bend and shape the figure to show how you're feeling in this situation.
- Use other figures and props to show who else and what else is relevant to the situation. Place and position the figures to show what is happening. This does not need to be elaborate.
- Looking at the figure you have used to represent yourself, what is s/he feeling in that situation?
- What is s/he saying to the other person/people?
- What is the other person saying to her/him? (*If there others presented ask what each one is saying to him/her.*)
- What role is this figure (*the Protagonist*) playing? What is s/he doing? How is s/he doing it? (*Help the person name the role using an adjective and a noun*). Record the role in the space provided.
- Have you played this role before with this person or seen it played before with someone else? Who is/was your role model? This may not be a real person; it could be a character in a novel or a movie. Record the role model.
- Rotate the template and look at it from the other figure's perspective. How is this person feeling? What role is s/he playing? What is s/he doing? How is s/he doing it? Record the counter role in the space provided. (*If appropriate/relevant, ask who the other person's role model may have been*).
- Can you connect what is happening in this picture with other things in your life? How has it marked or impacted you? How has it affected your personal and /or professional life? How has it affected the way you relate to others? Briefly record your thoughts in the "Discoveries" box.
- Do you like this picture?

### Serious Play: Create the ideal "Re-write"

- Close your eyes once again. Imagine the same situation or incident but the person who hurt you is much smarter now. S/he connects with you. S/he's in a place where she has discovered the treasure of who you are. This person acts in a way that makes you feel great. S/he values you. Project yourself into that ideal and really be there.
- Choose another figure to represent you. Place it on the template in the right upper box marked "Ideal". Bend and shape the figure to show how great you are feeling in this ideal situation /relationship.
- Use other figures and props to show who else and what else is relevant to this ideal situation. Place and position the figures to show what is happening.
- Looking at the figure you have used to represent yourself in this ideal situation, what is s/he feeling? What is the other person feeling?
- What is s/he saying to the other person? What is the other person saying to you?
- What role are you playing? What are you doing and how are you doing it? Record the role in the space provided. (*Help the person name the role*)
- Have you played this role before or seen it played before? Who is/was your role model? Remember, it may not be a real person; it could be a character from a novel or movie. Record the role model in the space provided.
- Rotate the template and look at it from the other figure's perspective. What role is the other person playing? What is s/he doing? How is s/he doing it? Record the Counter Role. (*If appropriate/relevant, ask who the other person's role model may have been*).
- Can you connect what is happening in this ideal picture with other things in your life? Is it familiar to you? Have you played this role before or interacted with others in this way? How has playing that role equipped you personally and/or professionally? Briefly note down any thoughts you have about this in the "Discoveries" box. ....
- **Do you like this picture?**

### Warm Up for a Meeting

- To have an authentic, heartfelt conversation with this person, where would be a good place to meet? Choose a place where you will not be disturbed? It may be a restaurant, a park, a private office, by the beach; somewhere you feel safe and a place you know you would both enjoy. *(If a participant wants to include others for support, tell him/her that in this meeting place s/he has everything needed to do this solo.)*
- Close your eyes and picture this meeting place. What day of the week is it? What are you wearing? How are you getting there? Are you picking the other person up? What's the weather like? Describe the meeting place. What are you both eating? What are you drinking?

### Meeting Place

- Create a picture of the meeting place with you and the other person using figures and props in the box marked "meeting place". Add to and modify the picture until you are happy with it.
- Project yourself into this picture. You are both enjoying yourselves. Tell him/her what you are enjoying about the surroundings, the food/drinks etc. Tell him/her you are happy that you are together and that you can both have a good chat and there's something you want to say. You have this person's undivided attention. This may be the first time this person has been able to give you his/her undivided attention.
- Looking at the scene you first created, say "If you only knew how this hurt me..." Tell him/her how you felt in that incident. "If you only knew....." Tell the person how his/her actions affected you and your life, "If you only knew..." Write down what you want to say if you'd like to.
- Now, look at your Ideal scene. Tell the person how it would have been if you had been treated differently and how the relationship could have been different. - "If you only knew..." Write down what you want to say in the box provided if you'd like to *(Writing is optional)*.

### Role Reversal

- This person has heard everything you said and maybe for the first time, understands clearly. (S)he had no idea how much his/her actions impacted you. Now s/he does. S/he's touched.
- What does s/he do in response? Does s/he move closer to you? Touch your hand, your face? Move and shape the figure to show what this person does. Feel free to accept this or not.
- What does this person say to you? Remember up til now, s/he was not aware of the full effect of his/her behaviour on you. Write down what the person says to you in the response box.
- What else do you need to hear from this person? Write down anything else this person says.
- What do you want to say to this person now that you have heard what was said to you?

### Anchoring the Shift

- Focus again on the Ideal picture you created. Look at the constructive role you are playing there. This role can be played in spite of any one else's behaviour. Close your eyes and put your hands somewhere on your body that shows how you are feeling in this ideal. This might be holding one hand with the other one, hand over heart, cupping your hands around your face, hugging yourself, straightening your shoulders, etc. Choose any kinaesthetic movement that will recall and anchor the feeling of playing this constructive role into memory. Keeping your eyes closed, stay there for a moment. *(Allow the person as much time as is needed)*
- How do you feel?

### Share and Go

- Up 'til now, you have been living with this mother/father/sister/friend/colleague *(pointing to the first scene)* Today you discovered the mother/father/sister/friend/colleague you want *(pointing to the ideal)* Now it's up to you to decide which one to feed.
- Focusing again on the Ideal picture, introduce the person to the world/ the group and speak about the positive attributes you have discovered. Say. "I'd like to introduce you to... S/he is..."

### Homework Suggestions

1. Take a picture of the ideal scene you depicted. Look at it often. Feed the picture of the relationship wanted and of the constructive role you are playing in it.
2. *(If relevant and/or appropriate)*With this new picture, you have the opportunity to consider forgiveness. A wise person once said, "Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other one will die." Regardless of whether or not the person is remorseful for injuries caused, forgiveness is something you do for yourself. Choosing to hang on to resentment drains energy and can even be life destroying.
3. Take the opportunity to talk about the good qualities of the other person to others. Forgiving requires "remembering kindly". Don't bury the hatchet and leave the handle sticking out.