

## REPHRASING AND REFRAMING

**Rephrasing** or paraphrasing lets a person know that he or she has been heard and understood. It is used to prevent misunderstandings. Rephrasing is not simply a restatement. It does at least the following:

- **Validates what you have heard by checking understanding**
- **Defuses "loaded" terms or connotations by paraphrasing the understanding and validating the emotion with which the group member delivered it, yet does so in a positive fashion**

### Examples:

Validating emotions:

- "Sounds like you felt attacked."
- "This seems to have made you angry."
- "Seems like you felt ignored or unappreciated."

Conveying that you understand what is being said:

- "You were upset when ..."
- "You believe that..."
- "You seem to be saying..."

Revealing a concern, worry or desire:

- "If I understand you correctly, you want..."
- "You seem to be concerned that..."
- "What seems most important to you is..."

**Re-framing** is a bit more complex. **It is the arrangement of a collection of ideas, feelings, facts, and/or concerns into a single common theme, often moving the group in a more constructive direction.** Re-framing ties separate and scattered statements together and often gives the group a common, perhaps previously unrecognized, focus or theme.

In the example below, a type of reframing is illustrated which identifies the issue as a mutual one and states it in such a fashion that it can be a springboard or transition into creative ideas, options, and solutions. The frame of reference shifts away from blame for past failures toward a testing of commitment for future joint initiatives.

"Based upon various concerns that have been raised so far, you seem to be talking about discovering new ways for labor and management to work together."

\*Remember to **validate!** *Never assume* that your rephrasing or re-framing is accurate until it is confirmed by the speaker. Sometimes, other group members will be able to perform the tasks of rephrasing or re-framing because of familiarity with the work situation and the speakers.