

Scenario 1

Facilitator Smith asked participants to describe the different ways men and women communicate in order to meet their respective needs. Mr. Smith listed class responses on the white board. Participants described men as being direct, succinct, reserved, to-the-point, unemotional, rational, commanding, physical and expressive through actions instead of words. Participants described the way women communicate as being constant, long-winded, critical, emotional, dogged, and at times insincere or indirect. After writing up the perceived differences, Mr. Smith laughed and said "It's true: Women are from Venus and Men are from Mars," and then asked the participants to identify ways in which men and women's needs overlap. The participants responded that both men and women want to feel respected, heard, and understood. Mr. Smith then asked the participants to think of how men and women can better communicate with one another in order to meet those shared interests and passed out a handout describing methods of healthy communication. Mr. Smith encouraged the men to sit down with their partners and role play some of the example dialogues together and employ the techniques described in the materials he shared. He warned it might not feel comfortable at first because both parties are hardwired to revert to their genetic way of doing things, but to be patient and that with practice they will see positive change.