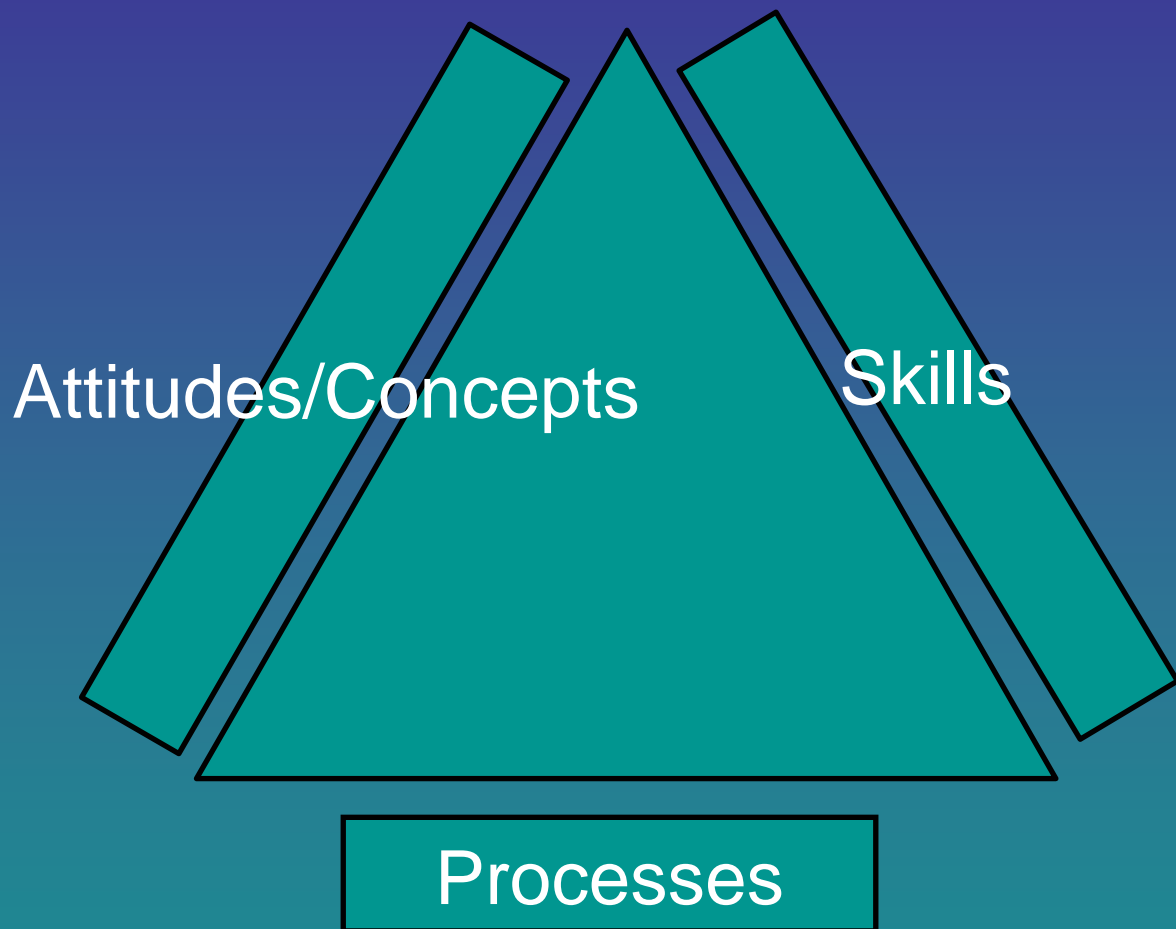


# Building Relationships and Keeping them Healthy

- The Quality of a relationship = the quality of communication
- communication = dual purpose
  - build relationships,
  - solve problems (meet needs)
- Effective Communication = Processes + Attitudes/Concepts + Skills

# Effective Communication



All three components are necessary for effective communication

# Basic Premise of Communication

Our Assumption is always

- Speaker's Intent = Listener's Understanding

Our Reality is always

- $\text{Speaker's Intent} \neq \text{Listener's Understanding}$

There are a variety of barriers between the ideal and the reality from culture to past history to distractions, etc.

# Exercise # 1

In 5 minutes, create a list of barriers to effective communication

# Processes

Interest Based Processes (IBP) have dual objectives:

- strengthen relationships
- build best solutions

At the heart of IBP's is an Interest Based Problem Solving Model, a six stage process that evolved from the Harvard Negotiation Project.

# So what are "Interests"?

Interests are the:

- Needs
- Wants
- Hopes
- Fears
- Concerns
- Assumptions
- Values
- Beliefs

on which we base our perceptions of others and

# Steps in an IBP

## Step/Stage

- Introduction
- Exchange of Perspectives
- Issue Definition
- Interest Identification
- Generation of Options
- Evaluation & Agreement Building

## Purpose/Function

- Create safe environment
- Each can Hear and be Heard
- Separate People from Problem
- Achieve Mutual Understanding
- Invent new solutions without evaluating
- Evaluate, choose, and reality test best options

## Exercise # 2

Compare at your table the relationship and problem solving processes your sector uses to the IBP model:

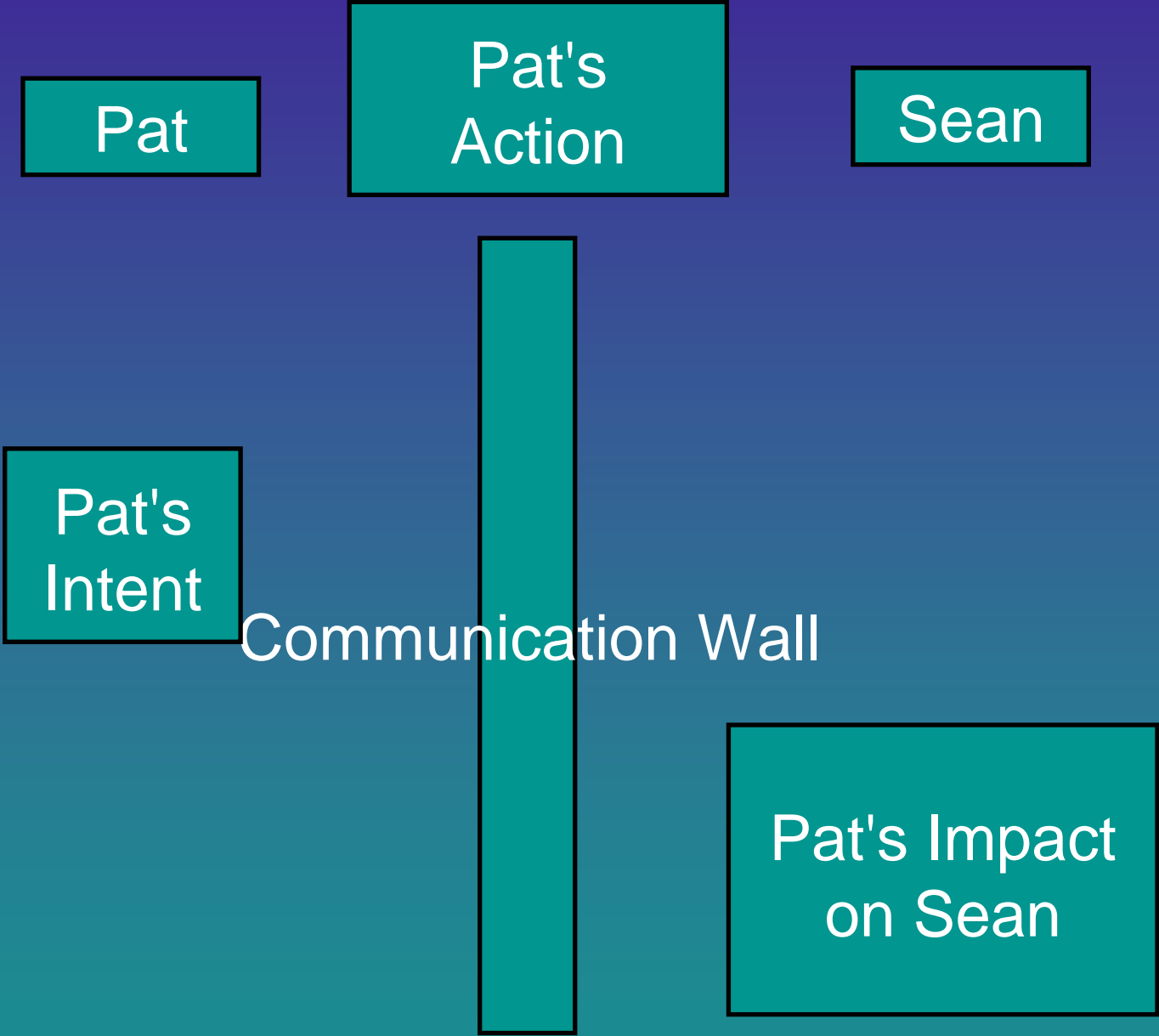
- Identify the process or model
- List advantages compared with IBP
- List disadvantages compared with IBP
- Identify the critical pieces missing from existing processes
- When would using an IBP have been more effective for your group?

# Key Attitudes & Concepts

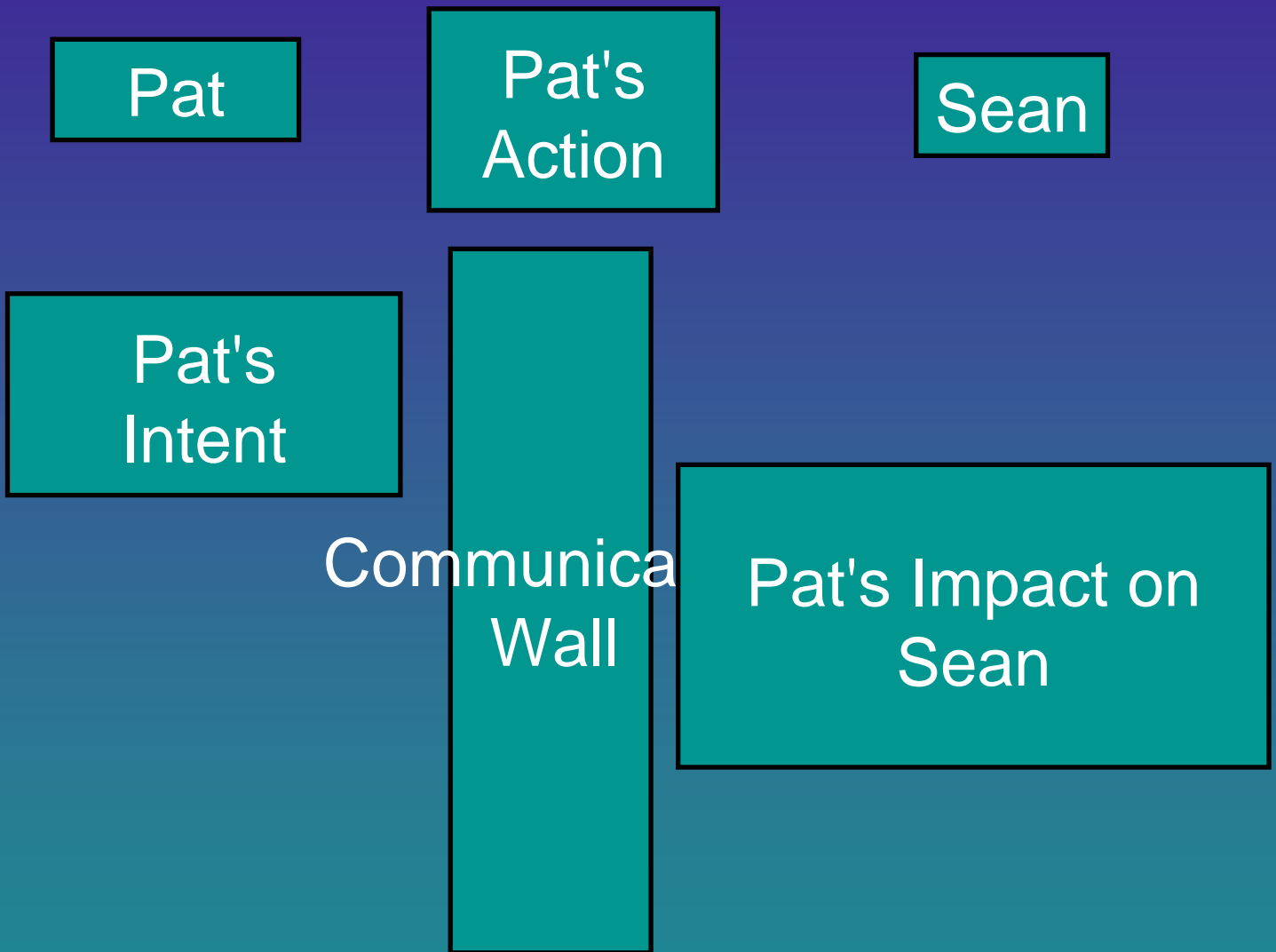
The next slides deal with these key concepts:

- The Communication Wall
- Judgment & Curiosity
- Truth & Perspectives
- Blame & Contribution
- Listening:
  - to Respond
  - to Learn
- Tension

# The Communication Wall



# The Communication Wall



# Judgment

When we hit the communication wall, we judge others by their impact on us.

We defend ourselves by our Good Intent.

Our Good Intent does Not Sanitize Negative Impact.

Explaining Intent before Acknowledging Impact

Adds Insult to Injury!!!

# Curiosity

Resist judging and assuming and guessing, by exercising Curiosity.

Be Curious about how the other person makes sense of what they think and do.

When we hit the Communication Wall, exercise curiosity about the intent of the other person and the impact we may have caused.

There can be little learning in the absence of Curiosity.

# What is Truth?

Each sector has its own perspective on each issue.

Each perspective has Validity to that sector holding it. It is its Reality and to that sector, it makes sense.

Absolute Truth is a narrow band of fact that is so sterile as to be irrelevant to the participants, i.e.: Pat and Sean went driving and Pat talked to Sean about driving.

What is relevant is the sum of the perspectives.

# Erasing Perspectives

Do we speak as if we respect perspectives?

But.....

You  
—  
Me

~~You  
X  
Me~~

My Perspective is more  
important than Your  
Perspective

No one hears anything you say  
after you say "but"

# Valuing Perspectives

AND.....

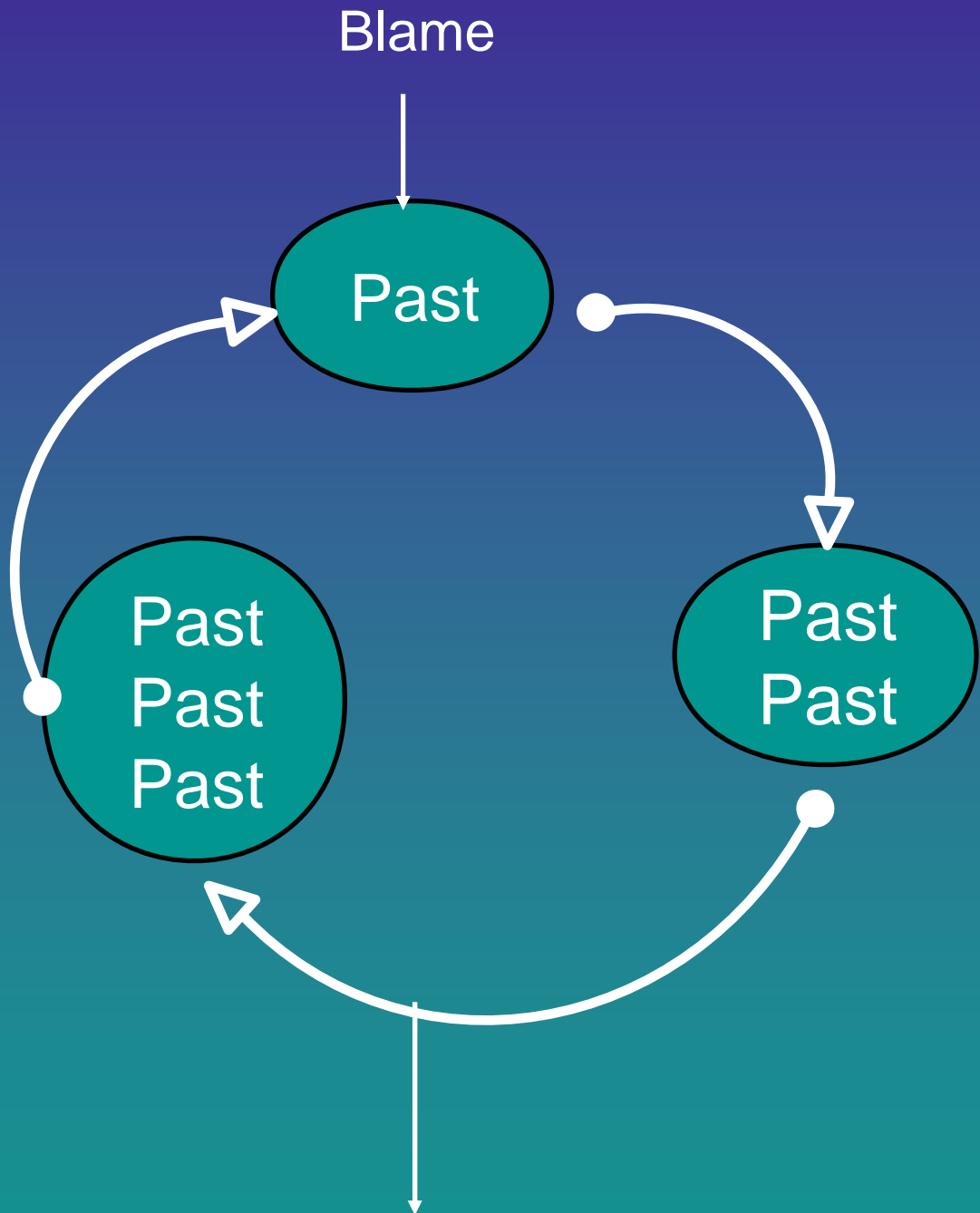
You Plus  
Me

You &  
Me  
Together

Both Perspectives  
are important!!!

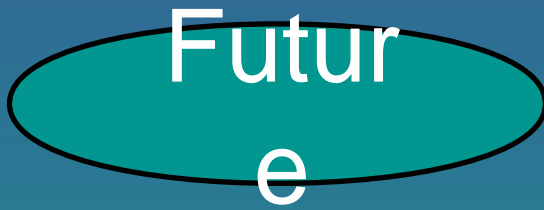
"AND" Joins & Values  
Perspectives

# Blame



# Contribution

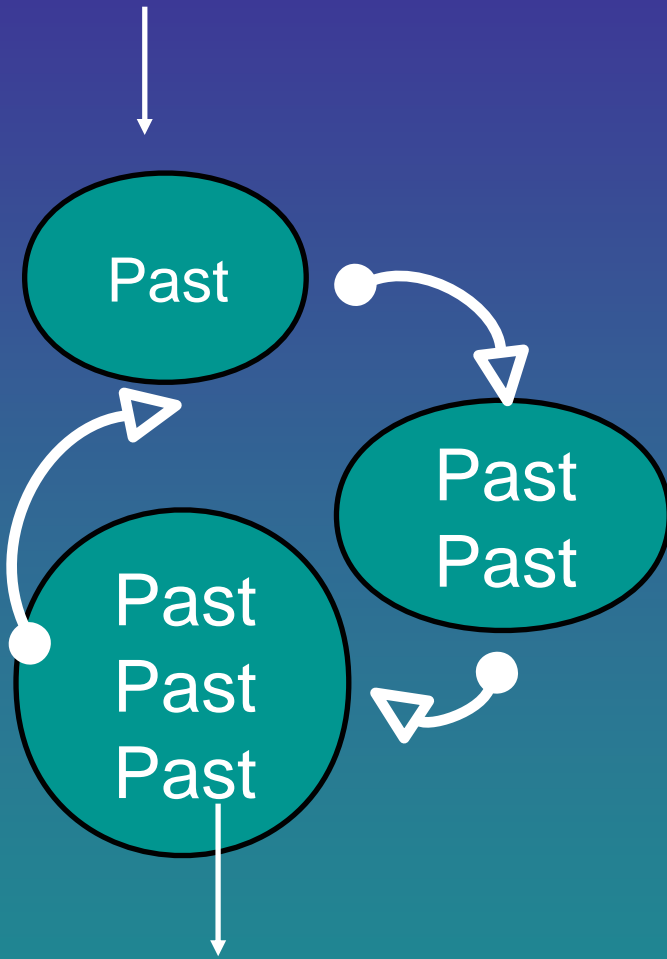
Contribution



What do we do Next Time?

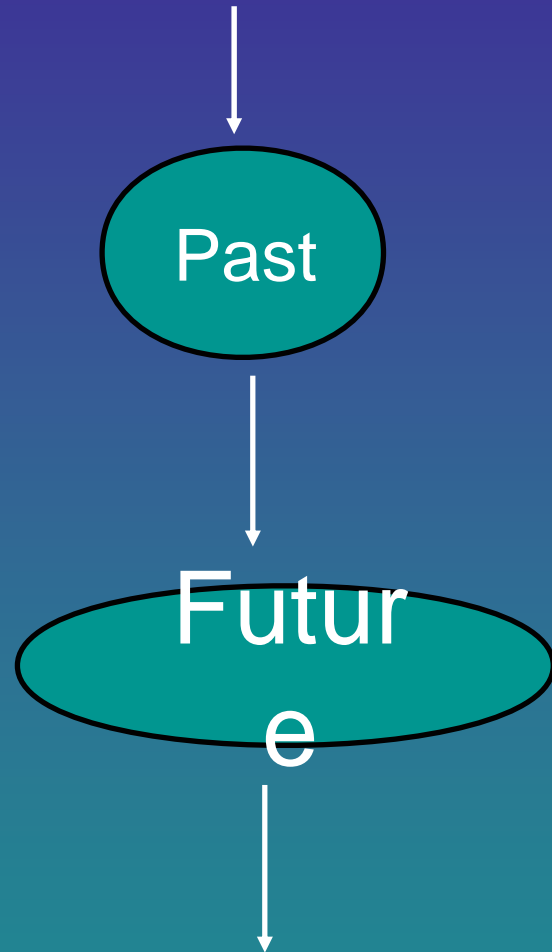
# Blame & Contribution

Blame



Who was More at  
FAULT?

Contribution



What do we do Next  
Time?

# Two Listening Styles

## ■ Listening to Respond

- Cut people off
- Finish their sentences for them
- "know" what they are going to say
- Impatient
- Judgemental

# Two Listening Styles

- **Listening to Learn**

- **Attentive**

- **Paraphrase/Reflect/Summarize**

- **Ask Open Probing Questions**

- **Curious**

# Difficult Conversations

When people feel tension about having a conversation, it is because just having the conversation puts in question for them:

- Am I competent?
- Am I a good person?
- Am I likeable?

AND

Does the other person think:

- I am competent?
- I am a good person?

## **Exercise # 3**

Evaluate either alone or with your table recent meetings or discussions where you can see these concepts and attitudes at play in the communication during the interaction.

# "I" Messages

- "I" Messages

- Notice behaviour/event
- Describe Impact on speaker
- Relate Impact to Underlying Interest
- Describe Potential Solution
- Invite listener to problem solve

**The Start of a Learning  
Conversation**

# "I" Messages: Fill in the Blanks

Here is a simple format for creating "I" messages, as easy as filling in the blanks:

- When \_\_\_\_\_ happens,  
(event/behaviour)
- I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
(impact/feeling)
- because \_\_\_\_\_ is important to me  
(underlying interest)
- I would prefer that \_\_\_\_\_  
(potential solution)
- What do you think?

## Exercise # 4

For 5 minutes, try to develop "I" messages using the fill in the blanks template, for the examples on p. \* of your guide.

# Paraphrasing & Affirmation

- **Listening to learn starts with ensuring we have heard.**
- **Paraphrasing is a skill that tells the speaker he is heard, and its companion is Affirmation which tells the listener that he has heard correctly.**
- **You can see and hear the affirmation when you have paraphrased accurately.**

# Probing Questions

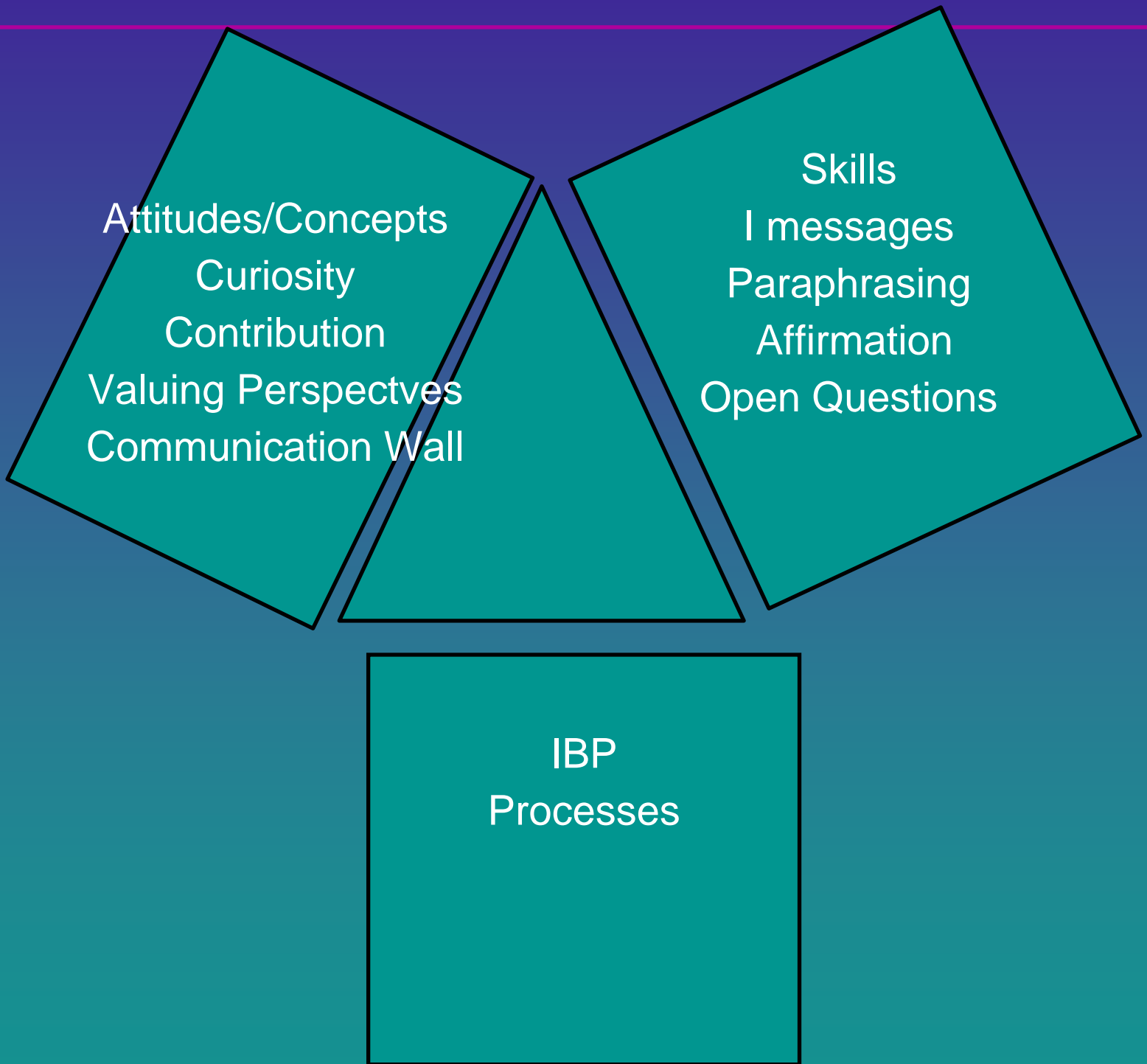
- This is where curiosity and listening to learn as attitudes mesh with questioning as a skill.
- Ask to probe, not to pin.
- Open ended questions are essential.

## Exercise # 5

For 5 minutes, with a partner, take turns:

- paraphrasing the statements on p. \* of your guide
- listen for affirmation, and
- asking probing questions in follow up to the paraphrase

# Effective Communication



3 essential components of a healthy  
Relationship!!!

## **Resources Available**

There are a variety of resources available to your groups:

- training from the Center for Conflict Resolutions Studies at UPEI
- graduates of the program in private practice
- Internet resources on group facilitation
- inter-governmental resources