

Course
Interpersonal Relationships

PRS-2101-2

Secondary Cycle One



“It is through relationships that we illuminate the self.”

Gaston Bachelard

Presentation of the Course *Interpersonal Relationships*

The *Interpersonal Relationships* course is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations that require them to maintain healthy relations with others. The course prepares adults to play an active, responsible role in their interpersonal relationships.

By the end of this course, adults will be able to interact cooperatively with others and reflect on their participation and communication style. They will be able to determine ways of adapting to a relationship as it evolves.

Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships*.

Our personal lives are a tapestry of connections between spouses, family members, friends and colleagues, which engage us in a variety of relationships on a daily basis. In all these cases, we aspire, in our own way, to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships, even though these relationships may be fraught with difficulties and challenges. This class consists of real-life situations that engage adults in exchanges where they must take into account

their own needs and those of others in order to interact with confidence and respect.

Real-life situations such as making a purchase as a couple, sharing household chores or working in a team encourage adults to establish and maintain satisfying relationships. These situations represent important challenges where communication and cooperation play essential roles.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Responding to a child's request for permission▪ Negotiating with a child or parent▪ Making a major purchase as a couple▪ Sharing household chores▪ Outings with friends▪ Discussions at work or school▪ Teamwork

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interacting cooperatively with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiates a discussion ▪ Cooperates in order to carry out a group project ▪ Assumes his or her tasks and responsibilities when working in a group ▪ Shares his or her point of view ▪ Participates in decision making ▪ Carries out a group project ▪ Asks and answers questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflecting on his or her participation and communication style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes into account the reactions of others ▪ Considers verbal and nonverbal messages ▪ Analyzes conflict situations ▪ Identifies strengths and weaknesses ▪ Identifies a relationship problem ▪ Lists conditions that promote teamwork ▪ Defines the roles in a relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determining ways of adapting to a relationship as it evolves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participates in resolving misunderstandings ▪ Determines the appropriate time and place for a discussion ▪ Provides clarifications ▪ Prevents and manages interpersonal conflicts ▪ Negotiates conditions that promote discussion ▪ Sets personal limits ▪ Takes into account the limits and capabilities of others

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

Class of Situations

Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships

Categories of Actions

- Interacting cooperatively with others
- Reflecting on his or her participation and communication style
- Determining ways of adapting a relationship as it evolves

Operational Competencies

Communicates

- Takes into account the person he or she is speaking with, the codes used and the communication context
- Adapts his or her verbal and nonverbal language
- Decodes the verbal and nonverbal language of the person he or she is speaking with
- Verifies whether the messages sent and received have been understood

Cooperates

- Contributes to task distribution
- Pursues a common, well-identified goal
- Finds solutions to relationship problems

Essential Knowledge

- Basic principles of communication
- Teamwork
- Managing conflict
- Managing emotions
- Decision making

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults learners make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class of situations *Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships*, adults must be able to interact cooperatively with others, be it in a discussion or during a task, activity or project with a classmate or a team. The adults consider the quality of their personal engagement and determine ways of adapting to a relationship as it evolves. They also consider improvements they can make to maintain healthy relationships.

Adults who interact cooperatively with others work towards a common, clearly identified goal. They are also actively involved in sharing tasks. During exchanges, they adapt their verbal and nonverbal language and take into account the person they are speaking with, the codes used and the communication context. They carefully decode the verbal and nonverbal language of others. They verify whether the messages they send and receive have been correctly understood. They make use of the knowledge they have about teamwork and decision making.

When they reflect on their participation and communication style in a relationship, adults are concerned primarily with decoding the verbal and nonverbal language of those they are speaking with and with verifying whether they have understood the messages they receive. Their reflection allows them to identify the objective to be achieved and determine how tasks are to be shared. They reflect on the basic elements of communication and on managing emotions.

Adults who choose appropriate ways of adapting to evolving relationships and exchanges are able to find solutions to relationship problems, and attempt to prevent and solve conflicts. They rely on their understanding of conflict management.

Evaluation Criteria

- Cooperates actively with others
- Reflects systematically on the quality of his or her participation and communication style
- Determines appropriate ways of adapting to a relationship as it evolves

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Communicates* and *Cooperates*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Communicates*

In the *Interpersonal Relationships* course, the operational competency *Communicates* is at the heart of all real-life situations that require adults to engage in an interpersonal relationship. It promotes their participation as it enables them to express themselves clearly and understand others.

When adults communicate, they take into account the person they are speaking with, the requirements of the context as well as the formal and informal codes used. When they speak out, they relate a personal experience, share feelings, make suggestions, and give and justify a point of view. They adapt their verbal and nonverbal language and decode that of others. They ask questions and rephrase messages in order to verify whether the messages sent and received have been correctly understood.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Cooperates*

The operational competency *Cooperates* enables adults to approach relationships in a spirit of fairness, where everyone has the chance to fully develop. This competency is at the core of all actions and attitudes of openness and respect that help adults become positively engaged.

Adults who cooperate are able to share tasks. They take into account others' strengths and limits. They work towards a common, well-identified goal. They find solutions to relationship problems and take part in decision making. They show solidarity by respecting the decisions of the majority. They show consideration for others by respecting differences in points of view. In order to prevent and manage interpersonal conflicts, they look for solutions that will be fair and satisfactory for everyone. They accept recommendations when relevant.

Essential Knowledge

Basic elements of communication

- Types of communication
- Principles of communication (e.g. diagram, obstacles and influential factors)
- Verbal and nonverbal language
- Communication techniques (e.g. "I" statements, active listening)

Teamwork

- Creating a team
- Developing a work plan
- Roles and sharing of tasks
- Types of leadership

Conflict management

- Concept of conflict
- Sources of conflict
- Conflict-resolution techniques (e.g. mediation, group consensus, reassignment of tasks, win-win situations)

Managing emotions

- Types of emotions
- Signs

Decision making

- Types of decisions
- Decision-making process

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Openness	Respect
By becoming more open, adults show an interest in the opinions of others and are able to accept different points of view as they interact with others.	Adults who are respectful are able to engage in a relationship and express themselves freely as they take into account their own situation and that of others.

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Support resources available at the educational institution▪ Recognized support groups and organizations▪ Professionals from CLSCs and social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Government publications and documentation from recognized organizations

Contribution of the Subject Areas

The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

Subject Area: Languages

Program of study: *English, Language of Instruction*

- Oral interaction to express personal feelings, needs, thoughts, point of view, agreement or disagreement
- Oral interaction strategies and techniques to enhance interpersonal communication or repair communication breakdown (e.g. use of body language, active listening strategies, turn-taking rules in conversations, repetition and reformulation, etc.)
- Listening to oral discourse pertaining to interpersonal communication (e.g. documentaries, excerpts from a television drama series, personal accounts)
- Reading informative texts about communication in interpersonal relationships (e.g. advice columns, articles on communication styles, managing emotions and conflict resolution) and expressive texts (e.g. personal histories and letters)
- Writing expressive texts related to interpersonal relationships (e.g. personal letters or journal entries)

Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

Program of study: *Computer Science*

- Formatting various texts (e.g. letter of encouragement or congratulations, project assessment, list of tasks or responsibilities)
- Searching for information on interpersonal relationships on the Internet (e.g. documentation; government, parapublic or community organizations offering support and information on interpersonal relationships)

Andragogical Context

The *Personal Life and Relationships* program helps adult learners mobilize personal resources when they are faced with change or need to maintain interpersonal relationships and communicate. It emphasizes self-knowledge, the process of change, harmonious interpersonal relationships and communication. It gives rise to learning situations that promote reflection and problem solving and refer to meaningful real-life situations. It makes use of the classroom context and thus confers a concrete, realistic and observable dimension to the situations that may be addressed in this course.

In all cases, the learning situations developed must be meaningful to adults and resemble the situations they encounter or may some day

encounter in their lives. Many different learning activities can therefore be organized: meetings with communication specialists, presentation of testimonials, participation in extracurricular activities or associations, documentary screenings, interviews or surveys, etc.

The real-life situations addressed by the program refer to personal experiences. They require adults to reflect on their personal history, perceptions and emotions and may therefore directly affect some individuals. For this reason, teachers should be careful to choose situations that do not intrude on the private life of adults but still allow them to construct the knowledge and develop the competencies required to deal with the situations.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Teamwork

Adult learners are often asked to interact and collaborate with their classmates. Whether working on a group project or participating in a class discussion or a committee, adults must be able to contribute to maintaining harmonious relationships. In the *Interpersonal Relationships* course, the class of situations *Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships* allows adults to reflect on the way they work in team. It encourages them to think about communication and establish the rules for creating a climate of understanding in a group. It calls into play the operational competencies *Communicates* and *Cooperates*.

In the first learning activity, the adults work together in teams on the first part of a research assignment, and thus set the rules for the team to function effectively. From the outset, the teacher places all of the necessary resources at the disposal of the students, including reference books, audio-visual materials, abstracts, and Internet sites. The teams must first agree on a research topic, formulate an objective and determine how to divide up the work. Then, with all teams present, the teacher asks each one to explain how it chose its topic and objective and how it divided up the tasks. The teacher writes and organizes the comments on the board, and gives an interactive presentation on the decision-making process and various types of decisions.

The teacher then asks each adult to recall a teamwork experience. Working alone, the adults identify the difficulties encountered, their causes, the solutions that were effective, those that were not, and those that could have been helpful. Using a fill-in-the-blank text, the adults describe their experience (e.g. place, time, persons involved,

series of events, perceptions, solutions). During the plenary session that follows, each adult relates his or her experience to the group, highlighting the difficulties encountered, the causes, the solutions that were effective or ineffective and those that could have been helpful. The teacher identifies the common points and concludes the activity by discussing elements of the communication process with the class.

During the third learning activity, the adults work in teams once again. The teacher reminds them of the importance of knowing and following the rules of the team in order to encourage participation and avoid conflicts. Each person must first list three behaviours that could hinder teamwork and three behaviours that could help it, and then shares his or her answers with the rest of the team. One person is asked to draw up the list of the behaviours mentioned, grouping together similar ideas. Based on this list, the team discusses the priorities for effective teamwork and chooses five or six desirable behaviours. The rules for effective teamwork are then drawn up once they have been agreed upon by all the members. During a plenary session, each team presents how it assigned roles during the activity. The teacher concludes the activity with an interactive presentation on task distribution and teamwork.

During the last learning activity, the teams are asked to assess their experience, describing their initial expectations and their level of satisfaction. The adults look back on the roles they played and evaluate the methods used to divide up the tasks. Using a drawing done by the team, they illustrate one of their more difficult moments and analyze it together. During this activity, the teacher

circulates among the teams, listening to the findings of each team and reminding the adults about the basic elements of communication, decision making and teamwork—concepts that may be useful for their analysis. The teacher also tries to stimulate exchanges and encourages the adults to answer questions. This activity concludes with a plenary session during which the teacher announces the next steps in the research assignment and discusses with the adults how this activity may help them with the rest of their work.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships	
Learning Situation	
Teamwork	
Categories of Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interacting cooperatively with others Reflecting on participation and communication 	
Operational Competencies	Essential Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates Cooperates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic elements of communication Teamwork Decision making
Complementary Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of research topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation required for each topic: reference books, audio-visual materials, abstracts, Internet sites, etc.



