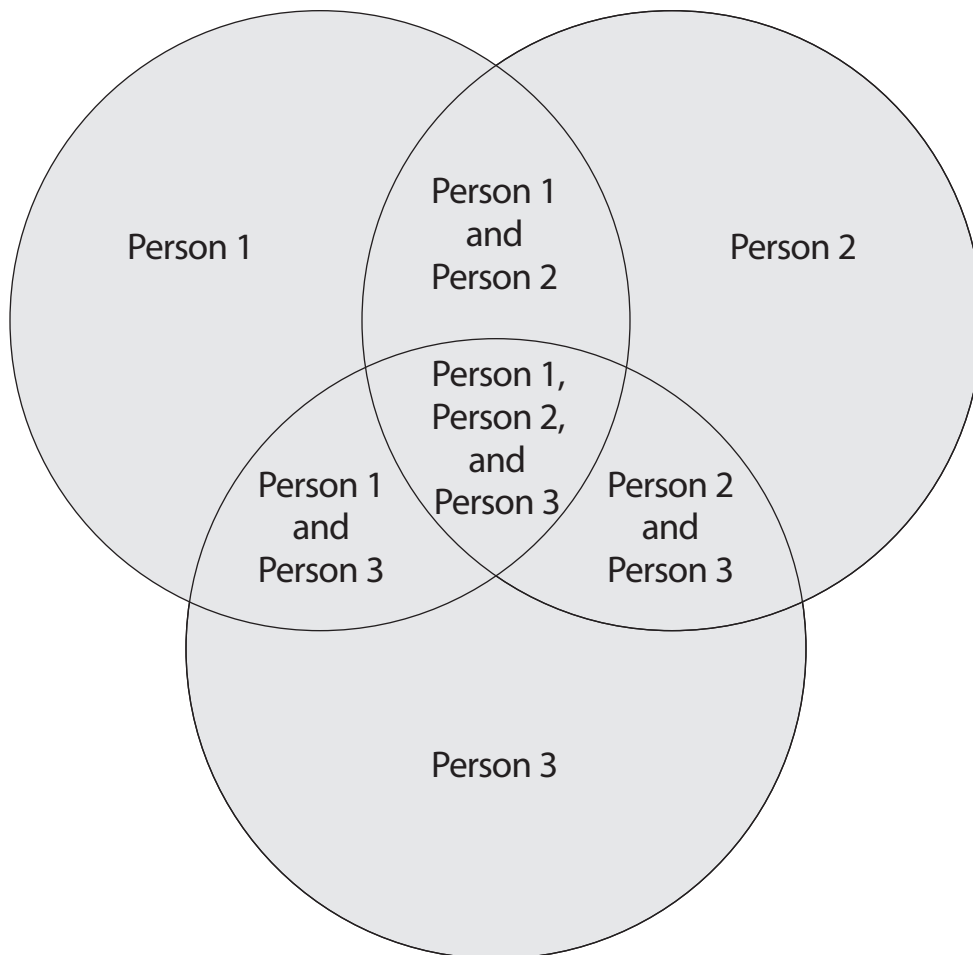


Our Different Backgrounds and Experiences

Venn Diagram



Stages of Group Development

There are four predictable stages that groups go through as they grow:

1 FORMING—The *Orientation* stage. Marked by confusion over goals and roles of group members, polite communication, strong leadership, and submissive membership.

2 STORMING—The *Conflict* stage. Marked by struggles to set the group's goals and members' roles, criticism of ideas, poor attendance, polarization, and forming of alliances.

3 NORMING—The *Structure* stage. Marked by organization and solidarity, honest communication, and reduced tension.

4 PERFORMING—The *Work* stage. Marked by productivity, clear goals and roles, harmony, and resolution.

The Listening Dyad*

DESCRIPTION

The Dyad involves a listening and talking exchange between two people. (A Triad is sometimes formed in the case of an odd number of participants.) It is the exchange of supportive or constructive listening (both terms are used interchangeably). Dyads are useful for examining experiences in-depth. They help us as we work through feelings, thoughts, and beliefs that sometimes produce passivity, undermine confidence, or cause interference in relationships.

The talker might talk about successes, problems, or situations that he or she would like to handle better, thoughts about an issue or experience, feelings about prior experiences that may be affecting his or her present or future functioning.

As it is with other listening structures, the guidelines are followed that allow one member of the Dyad to talk for a given amount of time while his or her Dyad partner listens attentively. Everything said in a Dyad is confidential.

GUIDELINES

- Each person is given equal time to talk.
- The listener does not interpret, paraphrase, analyze, give advice, or break in with a personal story.
- Confidentiality is maintained.
- The talker does not criticize or complain about the listener or mutual acquaintances when it is his or her turn.

The Listening Dyad exercise was adapted from a seminar directed for the Pew Partnership by Dr. Vivian Elliott. Dr. Elliott documents the Dyad in *Journal of Staff Development*, Spring 2001, pp. 39-42.

The Listening Dyad has also been promoted by Dr. Julian Weissglass in his book, *Ripples of Hope: Building Relationships for Educational Change* (Santa Barbara, CA: National Coalition for Equity in Education, Department of Mathematics, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1991).

*According to the *New Webster Encyclopedia Dictionary of the English Language*, "dyad" means: "two units treated as one."