



## **Humanistic Intervention Training 2026**

The following is a guide to Humanistic Intervention at the Oregon Country Fair. Much of the information that follows can be applied to any intervention, whether it is an emergency or not. All direct service volunteers deal with crises on occasion, so these principles and procedures are useful to have in mind and it is our guide to how we want to interact with each other all the time!

This is a humanistic approach to intervention as it is more effective for resolving problems and negotiating solutions with others. It is a fringe benefit that all relationships will tend to improve and the work experience will be more positive as crew members apply and use these concepts and skills. Defining concepts and principles will follow enabling the use of a common language for this kind of intervention training.

Humanistic intervention operates with the understanding that each human being is a unique individual who is more than the sum of her or his parts. Each of you will apply the skills and concepts from this training in your own way, making it your own. We accept imperfection in each other and ourselves. Working to improve this is more effective than judgment and criticizing. Respect, encouragement, caring and kindness tend to produce the most safe, competent, pleasant and powerful interventions.

## **Definitions, Concepts and Principles**

### **What is a crisis? A working definition...**

- If a person is emotionally tied to a situation and unable to deal with anything else in her life, this is a crisis.
- If there are strong and immediate negative consequences if action is not taken on a situation, it is a crisis.
- If the energy levels (emotional and physical) are so high that immediate danger is apparent, a crisis is happening.

### **General Concepts: 3 Chip Interactions**

This is an important concept to be the goal of any intervention, as well as a method to assess its quality. It is important to try to resolve a crisis or any interaction in a manner so, if at all possible, all parties concerned will walk away with the 3 Chips.

<b>The Chip</b>	<b>Core Principle</b>
<b>1. Respect</b>	Give the same respect to others you wish to receive from them. Be aware, and respectful, of personal space for yourself and others (your “bubble”).
<b>2. Business</b>	We are interacting for a reason; let’s get the task or job at hand done!
<b>3. Fun</b>	Remember where you are...this is the Fair! Fun is mandatory!

To assess the quality of the intervention, ask yourself: How many chips did you “win” in a particular interaction? What could have been done for everyone to achieve all three? What strengths do you have that help in this effort?

## **Molehills out of Mountains**

Keep a situation from becoming a crisis by remembering that for every situation at the Fair, we have incredible resources and skills, and have probably dealt with similar past situations. Keep a calm handle on your emotions and promote this behavior to all those concerned. We don't want to minimize or invalidate a person's feelings or experience, and they can take some comfort in the knowledge that we have encountered this situation and effectively dealt with it: we develop solutions based on the integrated wisdom of the parties involved. Whether something is big or small is a matter of perspective. Try to make it small and easier to deal with.

## **Teamwork & Safety First**

- **Be aware of your team members:** encouraging your group unity. The strength of the team depends on the energy each member brings to it; make sure yours is the best it can be. Always have each other's backs. Kindly take reality checks from each other. Remember to brief and debrief at shift changes and after an intervention.
- **Safety Distances:** Safe distance is generally two arms-lengths away from another person. Remember that safe distance triples when there is a weapon involved. (roughly 21 feet) Use safe postures and positions when interacting with others.
- **Exits:** Keep in mind that exit corridors are for everyone and never “corner” someone. Keep yourself firmly and lightly planted on your feet. Always leave exits and options. Anyone can walk away from an intervention. If they do, take a description and location, then call it in.

- **Walk, Don't Run:** Unless absolutely required or essential, walk, don't run, when involved with a crisis situation. Running can trigger responses in bystanders that will radiate out into the crowd in uncontrollable and unmanageable ways. A relaxed, confident gait and mode will be much more effective in nearly all interventions.

## Specific Principles

**Know Your Limits:** It is absolutely essential that you understand and respect your own limits in any given intervention. You need to be sure you are in adequate physical condition regarding your body as well as your equipment, such as shoes and clothing. It is also important to know if you have the authority/approval or resources to deal with a given situation. Ask questions if you do not fully understand the legal policies and procedures involved in any aspect of your work. In addition, you need to know when to back off from an encounter and hand it off to someone else. Be sure to always cover your crew member's back by being aware of the interaction as it is unfolding. Keep in mind your own attitude and history with the issues that may surface with a particular intervention. This is especially pertinent when dealing with situations that may involve some kind of abuse, particularly if you are an abuse survivor. Remember to take whatever personal space you may require. Respect others' rights for the same treatment. Don't put your foot down in applesauce! You can't set a limit without power. Know your options and when to call for backup.

**Separate:** Whenever possible, separate the "trigger" from the "reactor." Namely, move people away from one another who seem to be aggravating each other and the situation. Go get something cold to drink with the "trigger" while a crew member talks with the "re-actor." Distance can work wonders to diffuse many situations.

**Grounding:** This concept is one of the most important and valuable of all the skills shared through crisis intervention training. Grounding helps us get strong, centered, relaxed and connected to the Earth. With practice the whole process can take just seconds to complete. It is important to keep in mind the procedure for grounding and the order of your priorities,

namely grounding, process and content. Remember you are involved in grounding yourself; however, this will positively impact everyone involved as well as the situation in general.

The steps for grounding are simple. First, assume a comfort-able stance with your feet firmly under you, similar to a Tai Chi beginning stance, about shoulder-width apart. Keep your knees slightly bent and flexible, hips, torso and shoulders facing forward and in comfortable alignment. Make sure your hips/ pelvis are not locked and rigid - do a quick flex or rotation to keep 'em loose. Make sure your shoulders, neck and jaw are relaxed and not hunched or clenched. If necessary give your whole body a shake, wiggle or stretch, paying attention to areas of tension or resistance. Touch into the sensation of the electromagnetic field of energy you are standing on, drawing it into and through your body, refreshing and revitalizing it. Inhabit the center of your physical space with confidence.

Next, focus on your breath. As Westerners we tend to breathe in the top portion of our lungs. We can achieve greater oxygenation, as well as release of tension, with diaphragmatic breathing or breathing "into" your belly. If only your chest is expanding, try "moving" your breath lower into your abdomen. Drop your diaphragm and let your belly and chest expand fully when you inhale, then let everything deflate when you exhale. This will make you relax most of your torso at once and allow emotional energy to pass from your head, shoulders and arms to your legs.

Having loosened your body up with stance and breathing it is vital to keep your mind and intentions focused and clear. Re-member why you are doing what you are doing. As staff and crew, we are part of an incredible co-creation of community, art and culture. Our participation is a responsibility and a privilege. Without each and every one of us the Fair could not happen. Keeping our awareness on the important elements of safety, respect and fun brings integrity to this grounding process as well as your valuable participation as a team member.

Another important tool is self-talk, or re-programming the hu-man computer. Being grounded comes from your soul, the collective unconscious, and the energy in you that is eternal. You may connect with this part of yourself in prayer or meditation, communing with nature, by

studying physics or cellular biology, through a peak event or even a biochemical change. This part of you contains the broadest perspectives of time and space. You exist in galaxies and oceans at the same time your ego exists in towns and days on Earth. Let this part speak to the rest of you, inside your mind and body as you are grounding.

Your self-talk should include phrases that relax you, like, "Chill out" or "Easy does it." Self-talk can also include affirmations. These must be positive no matter the circumstance and strictly about you, such as "I have value" or "I'm worth taking care of."

Finally, include one or two "unhookers" or phrases that help remind you to let go of your concerns while you ground. Unhookers are statements about the "Big Picture," such as "I am just a baby tree in a great forest" or "Compared to the rest of my life, this is just a flash, a speck of time."

Below is space for you to write your own personal self-talk for relaxing, affirming and unhooking. Remember, use phrasing and language that speaks to you personally.

Relax 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

Affirm 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

Unhook 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

Once you feel grounded you are ready to proact instead of react to your environment or situation. No matter what you may be doing, there is ground, or how you are within yourself, process, or how you are interacting with the situation and content, what you are actually interacting with: remember grounding is your highest priority. Whenever you do not feel grounded as soon as the situation allows, stop and

ground again. Whenever you complete one task and turn to another ground again. First thing in the morning, as you start your day, always ground. You begin each day from relative ground and face the challenges of the day practicing and maintaining it. Your job is to stay grounded; the Universe and the experiences of your life provide continual challenges to that ground. Thus, you get stronger and more proficient with practice.

**Subjectivity:** We all have different perceptions, originating from our own unique set of sensory equipment. When we experience an event we form a map in our minds. No one's map is more right accurate or important than anyone else's, just different. We are all operating from a consensual agreement about Reality. So, remember there are no absolutes. Be aware of using the experience of an event with "I" statements: I saw, I heard. "I" statements are very useful when interacting with agitated people. By relating your experience and owning it you give the other person involved a similar framework. It provides an excellent opportunity to validate everyone's experience in the situation. Oftentimes, simply validating someone's emotional state and experience is all that may be required to diffuse the situation. Using statements such as, "Looks to me like you are upset" or "It seems like you are feeling hurt" provide a chance for the other party to engage with you and create a connection. Being considerate of others in this way is extremely powerful and effective. Remember to let them describe how they feel or see things.

**Empathy:** There is a difference between sympathy and empathy. Namely, sympathy involves feeling badly because another is hurting. Empathy, on the other hand, involves understanding what another is feeling. It involves compassion, which actually means, "to suffer with." So in having empathy you have the opportunity to understand the emotional state of another person.

In order to completely understand someone's emotional state we need to be good listeners, which takes a lot of practice. Practice reflective listening when someone is sharing information (personal, practical, emotional): repeat back to him or her what you have heard. This way you both can check in with the accuracy of both sides of the communication: how effectively it was delivered and how complete you received it. Clarifying what you heard is a chance for the speaker to really make sure the information was as understandable as possible. Listening with

empathy, having caring and compassion for the other person's feelings, creates a sense of safety for all concerned, which in turn will facilitate greater honesty and disclosure.

Remember we are all working – in one way or another – on ourselves. None of us is perfect or without flaws...and that's ok. We can accept one another just as we are and work to break the habits of forming judgments. It is essential we are able to share our thoughts and feelings clearly and safely. It is important to extend that courtesy and consideration to everyone we interact with.

**Assessment:** Upon arriving or dealing with any new intervention remember the importance of making your own assessment. Tune into your emotional and intuitive response. Intuition is oftentimes a high-speed integration of a large body of subtle information: things like body language, body chemicals, pupil dilation etc. Trust your gut instincts and use them for the benefit of the intervention.

Quickly establish contact and rapport with parties involved, being sure to communicate your regard for them as individuals as well as a commitment to a solution. Listen respectfully to the history of the event from the crew as well as others involved. Ask questions to reflect back the communication to be sure you completely understand what is going on. Keep conversations about the situation connected to those immediately affected; beware of the tendency to “table talk” by keeping information as close to the intervention as possible.

**Understand Anger (Protect by attacking):** Anger is a “fight reaction” to a perceived threat from a person or the environment. It is always fueled some kind of vulnerability. Remember to help people feel empowered by not exposing or drawing attention to the vulnerability. Have compassion for this; always offer choices and resources. People that feel safe, respected, heard and validated do not generally generate anger. Do not express threat or authority with your words or gestures. Rather, offer yourself as a resource for a solution. Anger triggers defense, vulnerability triggers nurturing.

**Responsibility:** It will never be our job to blame, shame or judge other people. Use language that reflects respect and positive intent. Being

responsible means having choices. Being accountable is paying the freight for your behaviors. Honor that agreement with your team members and yourself. When the time comes to debrief, offer encouragement and focus on what went well in the intervention, and what to focus on next time. Frame areas of concern or problems as opportunities for improvement. Remember, your debriefings can also be 3 Chip Interactions!

## **Procedural Overview**

1. Safety is your highest priority. Know your resources and SOP with regard to violence, fire, and medical. Always listen for these issues first.
2. Ground and create rapport. If safety is not an issue, or has been responded to, you have time to ground. Moods are contagious. Be grounded yourself and make contact, LISTEN, and offer choices.
3. Problem-solve. What's the question at hand? What are the different realities presented? Propose and plan.
4. Finish up and checkout. Did all parties get consideration? Anything still unresolved? What's the plan?

## **Five Interpersonal Rights**

We all have five basic and fundamental rights. Along with these rights goes a corresponding responsibility or obligation. These rights and responsibilities are as follows:

1. **The Right to Feel Safe:** Each of us has the right to not be abused, verbally or physically, by others. It is never OK to use physical or emotional abuse to control another person. We all have our individual interpretations of what is needed to feel safe. Therefore, it is important to learn our personal limits around how we want to be treated. We also have the obligation to learn the safety limits of the people we interact with and respect those limits.
2. **The Right to Space:** Each of us has the right to be alone. The right to disengage from any interaction is essential to stopping verbal and physical conflicts. To be able to take space we need to have a

sense of our own personal boundaries and the skill to set limits assertively, as opposed to aggressively. The right carries the obligation to respect another person's request for space, as well as agreeing to "return and resolve"; so that taking space does not become a weapon of abuse, abandonment or a power trip. If you honor the other's right to be alone, that person's obligation is to return after a reasonable amount of time and resume the discussion.

3. **The Right to Self-Care:** Every person has the right to pursue health, happiness and sanity through independent activities and relationships that do not conflict with other commitments. We all must assert our right to have our own friends, interests and activities. This is important for our sense of self-respect and a positive sense of identity. The obligation that accompanies this right is to allow and encourage others in our life to pursue their own self-care. To do this, issues of possessiveness, jealousy and insecurity may arise. However, it is our own responsibility to take care of ourselves. It's not another person's job to make us happy. If you need food or water or rest, etc. let your crew leader know and they will help. Make sure your camp and 'neighborhood' are secure.
  
4. **The Right to Our Perceptions:** Our mind maps show how everyone experiences reality in different ways. Each person has the right to be heard, validated and respected for our individual perceptions.  
Each person has the obligation to respect the perceptions of others and to extend validation and respect. Validating another's reality does not mean you have to agree with their reality.
  
5. **The Right to an Issue:** Each individual has the right to raise an issue and to have it taken seriously and negotiated fairly. If it is important to a person to bring up a problem then the problem deserves to be heard and considered within a reasonable amount of

time. The obligation is, of course, to give others your attention and respect when they bring up their problems.

## **Types of Communicating**

Recognizing someone's motivation in raising an issue often helps determine the appropriate response. Knowing the four types below can be helpful in choosing how to respond.

1. **Venting** – The speaker wishes to express feelings to “get it off her/his chest,” to be heard or understood, or to decrease feelings of aloneness.

Response: Reflective listening, empathy, validation. Make sure they feel heard and supported.

2. **Requesting** – The speaker is asking for something: an action, opinion or reality check. One may always ask. No power necessary.

Response: Reflective listening followed by a response to the request.

3. **Negotiating** – The speaker is raising an issue which affects both parties and seeks a solution which respects the needs of all concerned. To negotiate requires power.

Response: Use a consensus decision-making method, which emphasizes mutual respect and understanding. What's the question on the floor? What does each reality look like? What solution answers the question, is doable, and respects and considers all that are involved.

4. **Limit-setting** – The speaker is describing a boundary or setting personal limits around a given issue. He/she is clarifying a perspective, being assertive and/or presenting an ultimatum. Setting a limit always involves consequences.

Response: Your choice is to respect the limit or accept the consequences.

### **First Responders Principles**

1. Remember to practice all the skills and concepts included in the general crisis intervention training:
  - STAY GROUNDED
  - KNOW YOUR LIMITS
  - ASSUME POSITIVE INTENT -KEEP YOURSELF SAFE - AVOID BLAMING
  - RESPECT EACH PERSON'S SUBJECTIVITY
  - PRACTICE ASSERTIVENESS AND CONSIDERATION
2. We are attempting to evolve past the charges and biases associated with terms like “victim” or perpetrator.” When we learn of an alleged abusive incident (make no judgments) refer to an alleged proactor (AP) and an alleged reactor (AR). There are also significant others and witnesses.
3. When intervening with an AP:
  - a. Intervene without being judgmental or punitive. Do not confuse the act in question with potential actor. If you cannot manage this do not be on the intervention team.
  - b. Clearly identify and describe the AP and encourage her/ him to stay on the scene. Do not use force or try to re-strain. If the AP leaves the scene, track the location and clearly describe to the best of your ability.
  - c. Treat the AP with respect and compassion. The AP is under great pressure and is also damaged by the event. In order for the AP to cooperate the AP must feel the potential for a

positive resolution, or that cooperation is the path of lesser further damage.

- d. Survey the scene. SO's and W's grounded and present. Encourage all others to be on their way. If possible, move the intervention out of the flow of Fair traffic to a relatively quiet spot.

## **First Responder's Protocol**

1. Make sure you are practicing self-care. Stay grounded. Remember: personal safety first, then your team members.
2. Send for the appropriate intervention team (White Bird, Security, or Management depending on the situation).
  - a. Call Fair Central – locate a radio (find a Path Rover) or a Tinkerbelle (at all Info booths), give your location, report the nature and scope of the incident. Fair Central will determine the appropriate team to send from your information.
  - b. Get confirmation from Fair Central that a team is en route as well as an ETA.
  - c. Update data to Fair Central as the situation develops.
3. Let the involved people know that you are not the intervention team but are there to assist until they arrive.
4. Respond to immediate danger to the limits of your ability. Watch for and act on first aid, children, innocent bystanders and environmental hazards.
5. Keep all involved parties as grounded as possible remembering interactive priorities: ground, process and content.
6. Keep relevant parties at the scene.
7. Encourage uninvolved parties to disperse.
8. Gather data. Write a note when appropriate. Do this with respect and love. Be sensitive to the rights of all, especially the AP and AR.

9. When the intervention team arrives, introduce yourself, brief them on the situation and introduce them to the significant parties.
10. When rapport is established between the intervention team and the event participants, you may return to your normal duties.

### **Working Assumptions**

Remember to operate with some basic “working assumptions.” The reason I refer to these as “working assumptions” is that they are essential to a successful interaction. If any of the three defined below are not in place, you may quickly reach an impasse and not achieve a mutually positive result. You may not truly believe them all at a given moment, but you must proceed as though they are true. If you cannot do this, consider making it a point of order to establish these before continuing.

1. The individuals in the interaction share a common, positive mission.

Remember that each individual is a “hero in his/her own ‘movie’”. People tend to see themselves as trying to accomplish good things for good reasons. (see subjectivity, PXX). If for example, you and I are partners in a lemonade stand we will assume that we both want a successful business and an enjoyable work environment. If we are parenting together we both want happy, healthy, safe children. If you are working on a security team at a concert or public gathering and you are intervening with someone accused of being disruptive, you both want the event to be fun and safe for all. It is strategies and perceptions that differ, not general motivation or mission.

Suppose we are planning an event together. I want a beer garden because I believe that the guest will be happier and have more fun and we can serve it safely. You want to ban alcohol use because you believe that the event will be safer and more enjoyable without that substance. If we recognize our mutual positive motivation we increase the chance of developing an approach to the question that respects each of us. If I say things like “ Why do you want to kill the party?!” or you say things like

“Why do you want a bunch of drunks making people unsafe and unhappy?!”; we are setting up an escalating argument which will lead to a negative outcome between us. We may both feel attacked and misunderstood. If we appreciate each other’s positive intent we can begin to build a useful consensus.

One more example, I remember being a teen in the 60’s and growing my hair into a huge (by today’s standards) Afro. My Mother, bless her soul, asked “Why do you want to look ugly?”, a question that even at the time

impressed me as at least provocative, and probably doomed the conversation to a negative outcome. Each of our realities is different. I certainly had a more positive frame for my style choice and even if she were motivated to get me to change it we would have been better off validating my positive perspective as a beginning in the interaction. Do you think that people are easier to negotiate with when they do not feel defensive or attacked?!

## 2. You know you better than I do, I know me better than you do.

When you interact with anyone, remember that you are the authority in presenting what you think and feel. You will also assume that the feelings and thoughts claimed by others in the interaction are indeed where they are at! If you are confused by what they are sharing, getting a double or mixed message, you may report this confusion and ask for clarification by them. Avoid phrases like “that’s not what you really think (or feel)” as this will tend to generate anger or defensiveness in the other person. You are better off negotiating between all positive descriptions which will tend to happen if you accept each person’s self description at the moment.

## 3. Mutual Sincerity

For a positive interaction, you must both offer sincerity and assume that that is what you are getting from others. If you believe that they are purposefully manipulating or if they think that you are, it will be difficult if not impossible to negotiate in good faith. Again, if you find yourself doubting sincerity during an interaction, sharing your confusion (without

judgement) and asking for clarification allows the other individuals to make adjustments without defending themselves or getting into a power struggle.

These three working assumptions may appear more obvious than profound, but they are consistently violated when I work with people during counseling or mediations sessions. Ironically, the more familiar individuals are with each other, the more likely they are to presume about each other's thoughts and feelings, and violate one or more of these assumptions.

### **3 Arguments to Avoid**

“Who’s Right?” (the most common) Stay in the ‘subjective’ and respect the worlds as different but equal. Remember: You never know what was said, only what you heard, and you absolutely had to change it as you recorded it so it is never the same. “Actually” (like what actually happened) does not really exist in any provable way...we know only what we experienced and remember...and remember that the ‘maps’ get more divergent with rising excitement (and other changes in consciousness)!

“You’re not listening (or understanding)” Whenever you get this message, reflect what you understood them to say, and let them confirm or deny. If they confirm, they know you were listening, if they deny, they get to go again. Remember that they know themselves better than you do. Go with what they confirm (not what you first heard or believe).

“You’re not the boss of me” Learn to negotiate, balancing assertion and consideration. We are not telling them what they have to do, only offering a menu of choices and probable outcomes. Their next step is theirs. You are here to help them, not dictate. Authority breeds rebellion and defense. Makes interventions more difficult and dangerous.

\*To assess the quality of the intervention ask the following questions:  
How many chips did you “win” in a particular interaction? What could

have been done for everyone to achieve all three? What strengths do you have that help in this effort?

### **OCF Policy Violations:**

1. The Oregon Country Fair does not tolerate or support the use or possession of any illegal substance on the OCF property, including paraphernalia.
2. The OCF prohibits the use of alcohol or THC during public hours in public places.
3. Any violations of these policies that involve sales or distribution may result in removal from the property.
4. Actively seek out Fair Central to report the policy violation place and time.
5. Only intervene directly if you have been trained by the OCF.
6. Remember if you are wearing a staff shirt you are considered “on-duty.” You may be called upon to assist in the situation. You never have to do these interventions. You can always call for help, but you cannot just be present and take no action.

