

### Handout 3 – Message Makeover Lab

Rewrite the message without hiding the legitimate concern, need or boundary.

The aim is clarity and dignity—not vague politeness.

|                                                    |                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fictional message/situation                        |                                                                                                                         |
| Legitimate concern, need or boundary               |                                                                                                                         |
| What could hurt or create risk?                    | Words / label / exaggeration / joke / tone / timing / audience / privacy / image / repetition / power imbalance / other |
| PAUSE decision                                     | Speak now / wait / move to private / write / do not send / seek adult help                                              |
| Observable situation                               |                                                                                                                         |
| Impact or need                                     |                                                                                                                         |
| Specific request or boundary                       |                                                                                                                         |
| Rephrased message                                  |                                                                                                                         |
| Possible response if the message still causes harm |                                                                                                                         |

### Practice roles

| Role         | Responsibility                                                                                     |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communicator | Identifies the legitimate message and uses Pause–Phrase. Does not perform insulting wording aloud. |

| Role                    | Responsibility                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receiver                | Listens, asks one clarifying question and may state a boundary.<br>Does not have to agree or reassure the communicator. |
| Observer/process keeper | Uses the checklist, protects time and pauses personal, humiliating or unsafe content.                                   |

## Observer checklist

| Check     | What to observe                                                                        | Evidence or revision |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| PURPOSE   | The legitimate concern, need, question or boundary is clear.                           |                      |
| BEHAVIOUR | The message describes an observable situation rather than labelling the person.        |                      |
| SPECIFIC  | The message avoids “always/never”, mind-reading and vague accusations.                 |                      |
| DIGNITY   | Words, humour, tone and non-verbal behaviour do not humiliate or mock.                 |                      |
| PRIVACY   | The audience and channel fit the issue; private information is protected.              |                      |
| REQUEST   | A realistic request, boundary or next step is stated.                                  |                      |
| ACCESS    | The message is understandable and allows processing/response time.                     |                      |
| SAFETY    | The student recognises when adult support is needed.                                   |                      |
| REPAIR    | If impact is harmful, the communicator can acknowledge and correct it without excuses. |                      |