

Procedure 14.1

ImagoShare - Guidelines for all participants

A hosted email virtual community hosted by Imago Relationships International

To **post** an email – send it to ImagoShare@ImagoRelationships.org

To **reply** to an email:

1. Use “reply-all” to reply to the whole group (Are you sure that it is important that everyone sees your reply?)
2. Use “reply” just to reply to the sender.

Visit the following email address for the following:

- To **subscribe**
- To **unsubscribe**
- To **change your email address**
- To receive your emails in a **daily digest format** (one email a day with all the day’s emails included)

<http://listadmin.imagorelationships.org/mailman/listinfo/imagoshare>

If you wish to see the **archives** of emails on ImagoShare visit:

<http://listadmin.imagorelationships.org/pipermail/imagoshare/>

To **contact** the Host

info@Imagorelationships.org

To see **Guidelines for Hosts** – visit www.imagorelationships.org/policies and visit section 14.2

Please keep your emails relevant to the following areas of discussion;

- Imago Theory and Practice
 - Including how it relates to other therapy models
- Practice Building
- Workshops and Trainings
- News about members of the community, personally and professionally
- Serving the Imago community in the fulfillment of its mission
- Sharing Cartoons, Jokes etc about relationship issues

Please follow the communications email norms provided by the Imago Peace Project - 2003

For more information about the Peace Project visit <http://imagopeaceproject.org>

A. For Both Senders and Receivers

1. Use your full name both when sending and responding.
2. Be particularly sensitive to and aware of the increased possibility of projective processes (seeing, hearing, or attributing meaning in the communication of others which represent aspects of ourselves with which we are not comfortable).
3. Approach e-mail communication from a place of grounded centeredness. Exhibit the kind of respect and intentionality you would give to a partner or a friend in your own living room.
4. Frame thoughts as opinions rather than as absolute truth. Use phrases like, "The way I see it..." and "In my opinion...." Avoid coming from a one-up place of certain knowledge.
5. Remember that much if not most communication occurs non-verbally. We miss this in e-mails and are left to guess and to project. If attempts to clarify someone's send or response through e-mail do not prove satisfactory, consider using a phone bridge or the FirePit to work it out. In our experience, we have found that important differences in voice tone and inflection are communicated on telephone calls, that persons often come across quite differently than through e-mail, and that having others there to help maintain the norms of safety can be quite valuable.
6. Be aware of the limitations of the Internet. Some authors have noted that while it has greatly increased our ability to send large amounts of information, it does not yet, in its present form, guarantee interpersonal connection. Also, be sensitive to the fatigue factor of your readers and the likelihood that their in-boxes get mail from many sources. We have noticed that the sheer volume and the felt obligation to respond have caused many colleagues to drop off e-lists entirely.

B. For Senders

1. Consider finding out beforehand if the receiver is interested in the matter/topic you are about to send. For example, "Are you ready to listen to my reaction to what happened in our last exchange?" Our thought here is to develop an electronic process parallel to the intentionality used in setting up a face-to-face dialogue. Use "I" statements.

2. Stay away from “you” statements, criticism, sarcasm, attacking language, innuendoes, or purposeful vagueness that hides meaning from the reader.
3. Try to be clear about what you want from others. The clearer you are about what you would like in response, the more likely you’ll get it. Work to let go of your need to be responded to if you have not directly requested a response. If you want a response, make a direct request and clarify the type of response you prefer (e.g., validation, agreement, differences, like/don’t like, exploration, add-ons, etc).
4. When in doubt about what you have written, give yourself time to read it over carefully. Perhaps allow a cooling off period before sending. It can also be helpful to let a trusted friend check out your response before you send it.

C. For Receivers

1. Breathe and quiet yourself before reading, especially if the content may be conflictual or express views very different from yours. If the sender has intentionally asked if you are ready to receive his/her comments, consider saying electronically, in some way, “I am ready to hear you fully.”
2. Read the message carefully. Lots of misunderstandings occur because of a spelling, typing, or syntax mistake. Is there reason to believe part of the message got lost in transmission?
3. If a strong reaction occurs in you as a result of e-mail content, take time to explore your own reaction and thinking. What meaning are you attaching and why? Get to a more centered place before responding.
4. If, after using the guidelines above, you are still feeling attacked and/or reactive, we suggest that you respond to the sender saying, “Ouch! I’m feeling reactive. Could you please re-phrase and re-send that?” That way you are taking self-responsibility rather than possibly blaming the sender.
5. If someone sends an e-mail to you individually, we suggest a response within two to three days. If you are unable to respond at length, we suggest at least a brief response, acknowledging and thanking the sender for their message. Perhaps you will be able to send a more complete message later.