

# *Personal Space: Intimate Zone*

- Skin contact to 18"
- Reserved for close friends and relatives
- Voluntarily allowing someone to enter is a sign of trust.
- If someone enters without consent, we feel threatened.
  - Crowded elevators or buses
  - When visiting the doctor or dentist
- This causes us to:
  - Draw away
  - Tense muscles
  - Avoid eye contact.
- Sometimes people will use a prop such as a briefcase or a purse as a barrier to protect their personal space.

# *Personal Space: Personal Zone*

- 18" to 4 ft
- Eighteen inches is the space for couples who are in public.
- Two and one half feet to four feet is for casual conversation (at arm's length).
- Contacts in this zone are reasonably close, but are far less personal.

# *Personal Space: Social Zone*

- **4 ft -12 ft**
  - Used for:
    - Parties and friendly gatherings
    - Friends and casual acquaintances.
    - In business situations.
  - 4-7 ft is an appropriate space for:
    - Salespeople
    - Customers
    - People who work together.
  - 7-12 ft away is reserved for:
    - More formal and impersonal situations:
    - This would be the distance at which an employee and his/her boss would feel comfortable
    - It provides for a less relaxed conversation

# *Personal Space: Public Zone*

- Used by speakers and their audiences
- Used in many classrooms.
- It begins at twelve feet and extends outward.
- At this distance, two-way communication is practically impossible.
- Anyone who voluntarily remains at 25 feet and beyond is definitely not interested in dialogue.

# *Personal Space & Visual Territory*

- Penetrating visual territory is as uncomfortable as physical invasion.
- Any glance lasting longer than three seconds is likely to be as threatening to you as someone who is standing too closely when walking in public.
- As you approach another person, that person will glance away from you at a distance of a few paces, almost like a visual dimming of headlights.
- Strangers will maintain eye contact at a close distance, generally speaking only when they want something
  - Information or Assistance
  - Signatures on petitions, To complete a survey, etc.

# *Territoriality*

- We all stake-out and mark our own territory-space that we consider to be private and our own. It remains stationary, we don't carry it around with us; it is merely a geographical area where we assume some types of rights.
  - Your room.
  - Classrooms without assigned seats

# *Territory*

- Temporarily claim space in public situations.
  - Create a "territorial marker" by spreading coats, or books, or belongings on tables or chairs.
  - This informs other people that the space is taken.
  - Studies done in public libraries have found that when a book or a personal object has been left on a desk, it will hold the space for a person for about 30 minutes. If you leave-your coat or jacket on the back of a chair, people will stay away for about two hours.

# *Territory*

- Do not crowd someone else's space.
  - If a person is seated at a large table and is surrounded by empty chairs, you would be expected to choose a chair far away from the person who is already seated.
  - If you were to choose a chair next to the person, he/she would probably react with defensive gestures as he/she edged away.
  - If you were to move your chair even closer, that person would probably leave.
  - Rarely will anyone verbally protest an invasion of that space.