

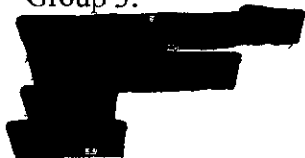
COM 114-Sec. 07

10-1-12

Knapp's Relational Development Model

Fight Club

Group 3:



Fight Club

Fight Club is a movie ~~that is~~ about a man known as The Narrator (Edward Norton) who deals with insomnia. He is miserable with his job and everything about his life. He is so unhappy that he attends meetings for people who are dying of terminal illnesses where he meets Bob and Marla. Bob has testicular cancer and is dying. The Narrator travels the country to discover why cars malfunction and if there is enough of the same incident for the car to be recalled. He travels often for his job and on one of his trips he meets a man by the name of Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt). Tyler makes and sells soap and just happens to be sitting next to The Narrator on the plane. Tyler hands The Narrator a business card and, when he gets home, The Narrator discovers that his apartment has been blown up. All of his belongings are ruined. He calls Tyler at this point and asks him to meet at the bar for drinks. As they leave the bar, The Narrator asks Tyler if they can live together at Tyler's house because he had nowhere to go. Tyler lets him in and they begin living together in a run-down house that has dirty water and wallpaper peeling off the walls. From that point they end up fighting for fun and start a club called "Fight Club." The club ends up growing in size so they move it into the basement of the bar where people come all the time to fight, but no one is allowed to talk about it. Then Marla, a girl The Narrator met at the meetings, shows up and starts a relationship with Tyler Durden. The Narrator is very jealous of their relationship. Fight Club continues to grow and forces Tyler to transform the club into "Project Mayhem," a job for these people where they live with them and are like slaves doing work and making soap. The Narrator is infuriated to find that Tyler made changes to the club without telling him. It all crumbles to the ground when Bob is shot and killed doing a chore for Tyler.

This causes the two of them to get into an argument and Tyler ends up leaving and buying plane tickets and traveling to various cities which forces The Narrator to follow after and try to find him. Finally The Narrator realizes that he was imagining all of this himself due to his insomnia. From the beginning, The Narrator was fighting himself and beating himself up, and he invented "Fight Club" all by himself along with blowing up his own apartment. This movie relates to Knapp's Stages of Relational Development by showing how Tyler and The Narrator meet each other and form a relationship, but then in the end they terminate the relationship which is the final result.

Good
transitional
sentence

The first stage in Knapp's Relational Development model is initiating. According to Dunn and Goodnight (2011), in this stage, one person makes "first contact" and strikes up a conversation with another person. It includes "safe, surface topics... The most important part of this phase is the first impressions we have about the other... if our first impression is not favorable, the relationship may not progress" (p. 107). In the movie Fight Club, The Narrator first meets Tyler Durden on a plane and initiates conversation by talking about his job and asking Durden what he does for a living. Work topics are usually surface topics or small talk and are one of the first things people talk about when they meet. The Narrator's first impression is a good one because he tells Durden that he is the best "single-serving friend" he has ever met.

Good

Stage two in the Relational Development model is called experimenting. Dunn and Goodnight (2011) say that this stage allows us to get better acquainted: "We may discuss topics more in-depth, but the topics would still be considered 'small talk'" (p.107). In the movie, Durden and The Narrator meet at a bar and talk over drinks for a few hours. It is still small talk because The Narrator is trying to "break the ice" before asking Durden's permission to live with him. This stage lasts until the two men go outside the bar. Outside, Durden tells The Narrator to

just ask if he can stay in Durden's house, and then says he wants The Narrator to hit him as hard as he can. The two of them end up fighting and after the fight they sit down and talk more. This conversation leads us into the next stage in Knapp's model: intensifying. } Further this

According to Dunn and Goodnight (2011), "Intensifying is the stage where people test the potential of the relationship with varying levels of self-disclosure to see if that will be reciprocated and to test the impressions one is making" (p. 108). This is shown in the movie when Durden asks The Narrator to hit him and the talk that the two of them have after their first fight. "Integration is the stage where the loves of the two people begin to merge and their status as a couple is confirmed. Also occurring at this stage are the beginnings of a sexual relationship and the deepest levels of self-disclosure are approached, signifying the intimacy of the relationship" (p.108). *Fight Club* relates to Knapp's stage when The Narrator starts to integrate his life with Tyler Durden by moving into his broken down house. } good

Bonding is the final step in the process of coming together in Knapp's model. Bonding is the display of a relationship that makes it official (Professor Colangelo). For example, getting married or anything that legally ties two people together would be considered bonding. In the movie, the bonding stage would be when Durden and The Narrator are together all the time and are running "Fight Club" together. The audience assumes everyone sees them as one or as an exclusive duo; that everyone considers them a couple in a sense even though they do not have a relationship like two people who are in love. They are more like best friends or brothers in the viewer's mind. Bonding is the last stage before the relationship starts falling apart.

The first step in the relationship falling apart is differentiating. This is when both people want their space yet they are still tied together through marriage or another legal tie (Professor

Colangelo). The differentiating stage is obvious when Tyler changes the name of the club and starts adding his own rules. He is suggesting that the two of them split up and that he wants his own space. At this point, The Narrator is confused as to what is going on and does not understand that Tyler wants his space.

The next two steps in falling apart are Circumscribing and Stagnating. Circumscribing is where communication between the beings in question drastically declines due to limits set by one or more of the beings involved. Trust is almost non-existent between the people by now, and conversations become more and more constricted because the people can't talk to each other as freely due to the lack of trust. If the situation continues to decline, the stage of stagnation will likely follow. In *Fight Club*, circumscribing would be when The Narrator starts to question Tyler Durden's actions and start going to the places that Durden has been.

More connection to the main

Dunn and Goodnight (2011) state that Stagnation occurs when nothing really happens in a relationship, communication almost stops, and the people are neither coming together nor coming apart (p.109). After a span of time, the relationship will move to avoidance. There are two last steps in coming apart until you have a ruined relationship. These two steps would be Avoidance and Termination. Avoidance stage takes the limited communication to a physical

Devile
Father

level. This is where partners may avoid each other altogether, desiring separation from one another (Wikipedia). Termination would be when the relationship stops completely. In the movie, this happens when The Narrator shoots himself. This shows that he is trying to permanently distance himself from Tyler Durden.

ever
the wikipedia, NO!

Knapp's Stages of Relational Development were thoroughly shown in the movie *Fight Club* by showing how The Narrator and Tyler Durden come together and then fall apart like most

relationships. Many relationships are initiated through two people meeting and leads to bonding and eventually may lead to termination. Many movies have Knapp's Stages of Relational Development integrated into them based on how human interactions usually occur.

Good
conclusion

I enjoyed reading your essay. It seems that you all had fun with your movie selection. However, there was not much of an analysis of the concept and movie. You do not have to force scenes in the movie to fit into your analysis, only use clear and concise aspects of the movie. Also, never use wikipedia as a source, it holds no credibility.

References

Dunn, D.M., Goodnight, L.J. (2011). *Communication: Embracing differences* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

~~Knapp's Relational Development Model (n.d.). Retrieved September 26, 2012 from Wikipedia~~

~~wiki: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knapp's_Relational_Development_model~~

Professor Colangelo. (n.d.). www.austincc.edu. Retrieved from

<http://www.austincc.edu/colangelo/1318/relationshipstages.htm>

- Never use Wikipedia, this is the WORST source ever! Anyone can get on wikipedia and add or edit any information listed.



I. Introduction

A: Movie Summary, trailer

B: Introduce Characters of movie

II. Explaining the steps of Knapp's relational development model

A: Introduce concept

B: Define the steps of Knapp's relational development model

III. Play game

A: Show how the movie connected with Knapp's relational development model

B: Use clips to make sure the class understands how it connects, and to give visual examples of the steps

IV. Conclusion