

COMMUNICATION

101

The Subtle Art of Relating



Jon Burras

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1. Lesson One

A Thought or a Feeling

How do you see the world? As a problem to be solved? As a bunch of intellectual observations? As an emotional response?

When someone is in "his head" he will often communicate by saying "I think" a lot. For example, "*I think you are wrong!*"

"I think you are crazy." "I think I am hungry".

The reality is that there is a big distinction between our word choices. Thinking, feeling, judging and imagining are four very distinct reference points.



1. Exercise

Sit across from another person. Repeat the following phrases and then fill in the blanks.

1. When I look at you I think _____

2. When I look at you I feel _____

3. When I look at you I imagine _____

4. When I look at you I judge _____

Examples of Thoughts Versus Feelings

1. A thought is an actual truth in the present or the past. It has no value to it or judgment. It is just a factual truth.

When I look at you I think.....

about the list of projects I must do this weekend
about how much money we are spending on our
home mortgage
(past) about the time we had a nice vacation to France
about all the workshops we have done together
about the time you shared with me your car
buying experience

2. A feeling is an emotional response.

When I look at you I feel.....

sad that I never got to know you
happy watching you practice yoga
confused at what you are trying to say
elated that you are my partner
curious about where you buy your jewelry

3. Imagination is something that you made up in you that may or may not be true.

When I look at you I imagine.....

that you are wealthy
that you are educated
that you have a nice family
that you are well rested
that you are a compassionate person

4. A judgment is a value statement. (A comparison)

When I look at you I judge you.....

for being a member of the other party
for your sexual orientation
as being anti purple people
for your loud and rude personality
for not making yourself more socially presentable

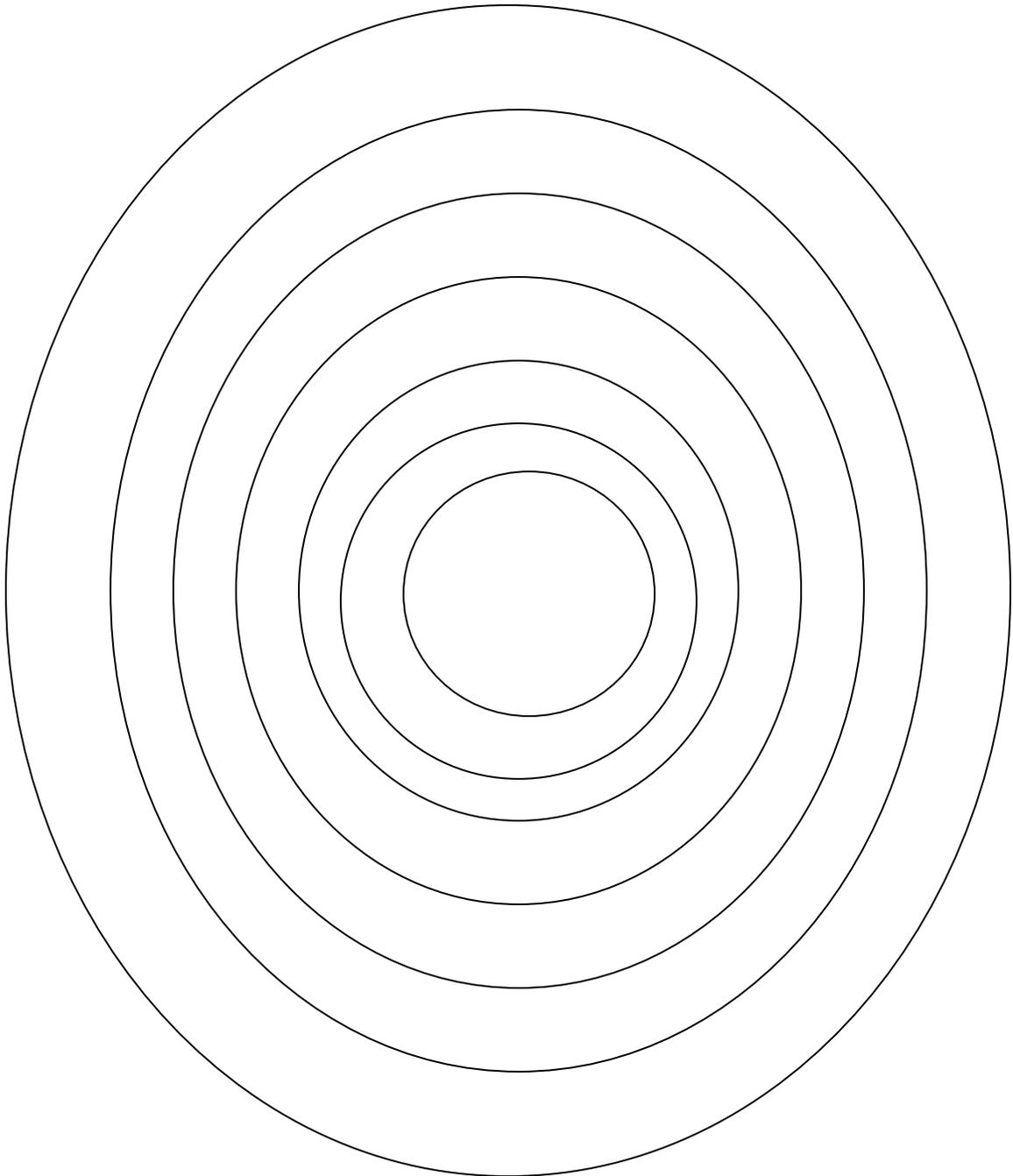
To ASSUME...

**Makes an ASS out of U
and Me**



Lesson Two

Relationship Circle



Exercise

Place yourself in the center of your circle. Nobody else is allowed in. This is your deepest relationship with yourself and your God, spirit, or universal connection.

As the circles move outward place the people in your life. The circle closest to you are the people who you are the closest to. The farthest circle is for people who you might have had a relationship with in the past or who you see on a surface level (like the postman or the clerk at the store).

The people closest to you should be those who you confide with your deepest darkest secrets. These are the people who will be there for you when you need them the most and not just when things are convenient.

Layer the rest of the circles with people who you might have different types of relationships with, from very close to very far away, from business-like to single purpose (like a tennis partner).

Notice Conflict

Here is where we begin to understand our communication conflicts. You might want someone to be right near you in your inner most circle (like a spouse or a parent) and they wish to be in a farther out orbit. That is conflict. You want something from them that they are unwilling or unable to give you.

In another example, there might be someone who you have placed in an outer orbit but they want to be much closer than you would like. This is an example of a boundary violation (like a stalker or workplace harassment).

Peace occurs when you are in agreement with where all of your relationships should be. Communication conflicts arise when either you wish to move someone either closer or farther out in your circle or someone refuses to come closer as you desire them to or approaches closer than you have given permission for.

Lesson Three

Reflective Listening



Communication is not just about speaking but about listening as well. Many people will speak but they will not listen to others' response. It becomes a one-sided conversation. Others will continue to interrupt without you finishing what you are saying.

Reflective listening begins by actually hearing what someone else is saying without reacting to their words and preparing an aggressive response well before they are even finished with their statement. Communication should be an opportunity to share ideas and not to try to dominate another by words or intellect.

When you are practicing reflective listening you are attempting to hear every word that another is saying. You then repeat back to them what you heard. You do this without adding or subtracting from their statement. Once you have repeated what they have said then you might add your own input.

Most people talk because they really want to be heard. If they feel like they are not heard they will keep on talking.

Exercise

Sit down across from your partner and practice reflective listening. This means ask them to talk to you about something that is important to them. This dialog could be about their work, a hobby, their vacations, their family or their pets. Sit quietly and practice reflective listening by being quiet most of the time and from time to time repeating what they have said.

What not to do:

- **Don't try to negate their story**
- **Don't add to their story**
- **Don't talk about yourself and compare your similar experiences**
- **Don't multitask (in other word, don't play with your phone texts while you are talking)**
- **Don't judge their story**
- **Don't interrupt**

What to do:

- **Make eye contact**
- **Make them important**
- **Repeat at intervals what they have told you**
- **Use words like "Tell me more", "That sounds interesting" or "What was that like?"**
- **Make it about them and not about you**

Lesson Four

Scale of Importance



"But Honey, I did not know that it meant that much to you or I would have done it."

How often have you heard the preceding statement? Many conflicts can be avoided if we understand the value something has for someone else. We create chaos because we make decisions by assuming that something that you place with little or great value will have the same amount of value for someone else.

If you bring home *Miracle Whip* instead of *Real Mayonnaise* and that is vitally important to your partner then your marriage could be in trouble.

If one person in a relationship really wants to go to *Disneyland* and the other partner decides to squash those desires. In a dynamically healthy relationship you would ask a simple question, "How important is it to go to *Disneyland*?" Using a number system the partner might say that it is an "9" out of a scale of "10". The other partner had placed his number at a "3" out of "10". You either have to come to a compromise or honor the importance of the person's value system. Whatever choice you make you will not be assuming how important something is to you and others.

Exercise

How important is it?

Sit across from your partner and make a list of the things in your life where you might have conflict. These could also be areas where one or both parties made assumptions about something's value. Make it a point that when you have to make decisions about things in your life, from which house to buy to which flavor of ice cream to bring home, you will discuss how important something is to each individual. Use a number value scale of 1-10, one being the least important and ten being the most important.

Examples:

How important is it?

- **To go out or stay home**
- **To get my preferred spot in yoga class**
- **To be on time when we go somewhere**
- **To save money**
- **To have the car I feel good in**
- **To go away to college**
- **To eat healthy**
- **To exercise regularly**
- **To watch my television programs**
- **To have quiet time**
- **To travel**
- **To attend family events**
- **To walk the dog**
- **To take a nap**
- **To get my hair cut**
- **To paint the house**
- **To have friends over**

Lesson Five

Sinking Down to Communicate



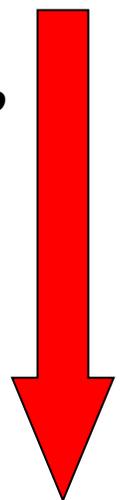
An important rule in communication is the following:

"The individual who has the most skill or knowledge must go down to meet the person who has the least amount of skill or knowledge. The least knowledgeable or least skilled cannot go up to meet the most skilled or knowledgeable."

Communication is often a one way street. Traffic can only flow in one direction. If you want to achieve your goal and communicate with someone then you must be on par with their level or you will not be heard.

Instance #1.

If you have a Ph.D. in mathematics it will do you no good to try to teach most 7 year olds advanced trigonometry or calculus. You will have to go down to the student's level and match his present state in order to be heard. This might be basic addition and subtraction.



Exercise

Part One:

Determine who has the most skill or knowledge in a relationship. The most skilled person will always have to go down to accurately communicate with the least skilled.

Part Two:

Situations of uneven communication, skill or knowledge

- 1. An expert mechanic trying to describe to a non-mechanical person what is wrong with their car**
- 2. A doctor to a patient**
- 3. An emotionally present spouse with an emotionally absent spouse**
- 4. A dog owner with a dog**
- 5. A parent with a child**
- 6. A teacher with a student**
- 7. A member of a military family with a member or a non-military family**
- 8. A boss with an employee**
- 9. A police officer with a homeless person**
- 10. A computer technician with an average computer owner**
- 11. A spouse operating out of love with a partner operating out of fear**
- 12. A positive person with a negative person**

Lesson Six

Introvert or Extrovert



Whether you are an "introvert" or an "extravert" will determine how you communicate and will demonstrate a unique perspective on your world. Understanding one's internal programming helps to make communication easier.

Introvert: When needing to recover their energy they seek a quiet and alone place. They retreat into their cave in order to process information, rest, rebuild their energy and make sense of their world. They do not want to be around people or too much excitement in order to rekindle their inner flame.

Extrovert: This individual requires stimulation in order to rebuild themselves. They seek out parties and social life in order to feel good about themselves. They ignite their inner fire with activity, groups and entertainment.

Exercise

Question #1: Are you an introvert or an extrovert?

Question #2: What type of character types (introvert or extrovert) are the most important people in your life? (spouse, children, bosses and friends)

Question #3: What types of conflicts might arise when an extrovert and an introvert come together?

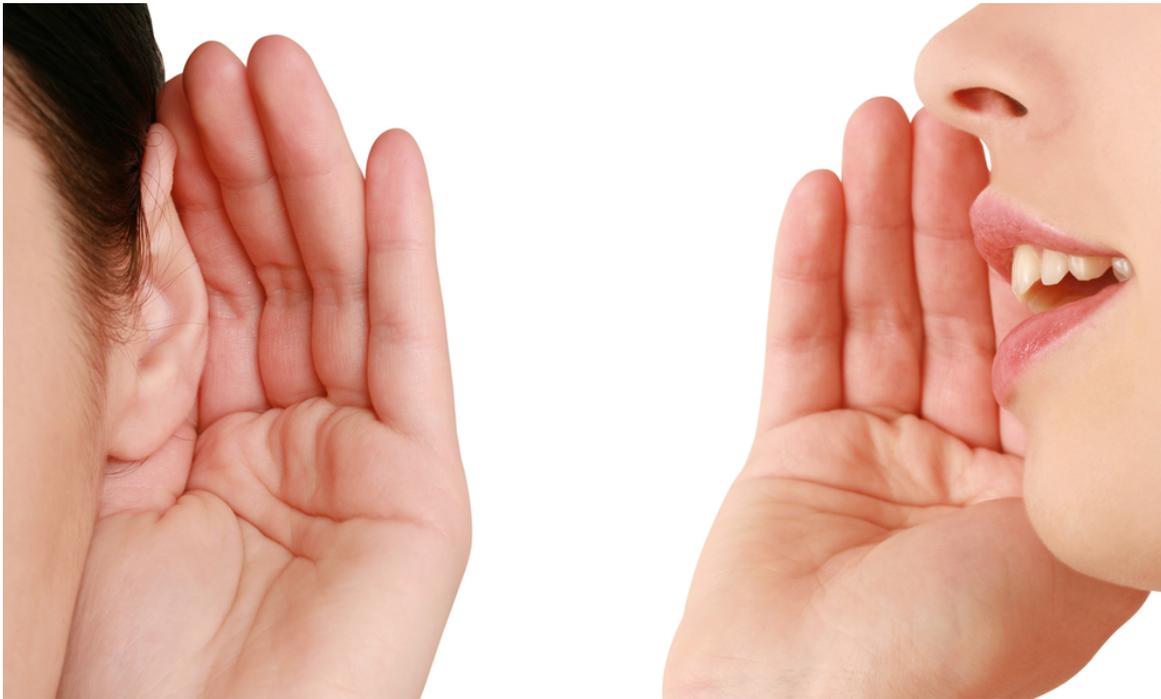
Example: Extrovert says, "*You never want to go out.*" Introvert says, "*Can't we just stay home?*"

Example: An introvert says, "*Let's stay home and watch a movie.*" An extrovert says, "*I really need to get out of the house.*"

Question #4: How do you bridge the gap between an introvert and an extrovert?

Lesson Seven

Giver or Taker/Listener or Speaker



Why Do We Communicate?

Relationships are not always even or fair. Sometimes a relationship is an eighty/twenty experience. This means that you might give eighty percent and only get twenty percent back. It is unusual to find fifty/fifty relationships.

We communicate for many reasons. Some people just need to be heard because they were never heard growing up by a parent perhaps. Others communicate to show how smart they are and always need to be right. These are the debaters of the world.

Some people are active listeners and put themselves last as others often dominate the conversation. Some communicate because they are interested in collaborating with others on ideas in order to develop bigger goals.

Why do you communicate?

Exercise

Have you thought about how your relationships might not always be fair or even? Do you feel like you talk too much and have a difficulty listening or are you the one on the short end of the stick where you are never able to get a word in?

Exercise #1:

1. Take an inventory of some of the significant relationships in your life (parents, spouse, partner, children, boss, friends, colleagues, etc). Give them a number as far as their equality. For instance, you might say that with my mother I give ninety percent and only get back ten percent. I am the giver and she is the taker in that relationship.

Exercise #2. What is your intention with each communication?

When you communicate with a certain person what is your intent?

Example: With my son-in-law I always try to be right.

Do you want to be right?

Do you want to be heard?

Do you want to share intimacy?

Do you want to win?

Do you want to punish?

Do you want to collaborate?

Do you want to teach?

Do you want to observe?

Lesson Eight

Find Something to Agree On



If you are looking for the hole in a donut you will find it. If you are looking for the negative in things you will find it. However, when it comes to communication, if you are looking for things to agree upon then you will also find it.

Communication first begins with speaking the same language, something both parties can agree on. From there you can build a base of other areas where you might agree. As you move up the ladder of trying to resolve conflicts you can always go back to the fundamentals—What have you agreed on already?

Example:

Imagine if nine blind men all grabbed a different part of an elephant. One grabbed the tail, another the trunk and so on. Each one had its own interpretation of what they were holding onto. The only thing that they could agree on was that this was a very large animal.

Conversations begin when you can first agree on something.

Exercise

Identify conflicts and find agreements

Part 1: Identify a family conflict and see if you can agree on something. Imagine that you are speaking with someone who has a different opinion.

Examples:

How to spend money

Where to vacation

How to deal with home remodeling

To leave the toilet seat up or down

How to parent

What types of food to buy

To buy cable or satellite television

To watch "*American Idol*" or "*The Voice*" on television

Part 2: Identify a local issue and see if you can agree on something. Imagine that you are speaking with someone who has a different opinion.

Examples:

Growing homeless population in the neighborhood

How to rescue all the abandoned dogs

Over-crowded streets

Red-light cameras

Are teachers paid enough?

Property taxes going up

Part 3: Identify a national or international issue and see if you can agree on something. Imagine that you are speaking with someone who has a different opinion.

Examples:

Is "Global Climate Change" a real thing?

Death of bee populations

Polluted oceans

Ebola virus

To vaccinate or not vaccinate

To send a spaceship to Mars or not

To pay college athletes for playing a sport

Lesson Nine

Character Types

In the 1950's Alexander Lowen finalized work on identifying specific patterns in all of us based on how we perceived our world. These were called *Bioenergetic Character Types*. When we communicate with each other we are not always saying or wanting the same thing. This is because our internal character is guiding our dialog.

The character types referenced specific patterns of behavior like fear of abandonment, needing power, needing to stay in control or fear of being alive. Each character type will communicate in a different manner. When we are in relationship with others we often run into conflicts because we do not understand our own character and completely misinterpret someone else's character.

Here are the different character types according to Alexander Lowen;



1. *Schizoid*, 2. *Oral*, 3. *Compensating Oral*, 4. *Rigid*, 5. *Psychopathic*, and 6. *Masochist*. All the character types refer to a different age and period of our lives where we remain frozen in time. That then becomes our reference point and determines how we communicate.

Example #1

Psychopathic versus Oral

The *Psychopathic* character type is all about power. When he walks into a supermarket and wants a paper bag instead of plastic he will demand it by saying something like, "I would like a paper bag." There might be a sense of entitlement.

The *Oral* character type is all about abandonment and when they walk into a supermarket asking for a paper bag instead of a plastic bag they will be more timid saying something like, "Can I please have a paper bag if it is no trouble to you." It is all about the fear of rejection which equates to abandonment in the eyes of the *Oral* character.

Example #2

When driving in a car with a *Rigid* character type they most likely will want to drive. They are all about control and driving gives them the sense of control. A *Masochist* who is all about low self-esteem won't care who is driving as long as it is not themselves. They are content to just go along for the ride.

Exercise

Define Your Character



Schizoid: This character type has a deep fear of life. They are afraid to take risks, would have tremendous stage fright and do not feel safe in their own skin. They are usually tall and very thin.



Oral: The Oral character has a deep seated fear of abandonment. They struggle with risk taking, can be timid and shy. Rejection equals abandonment to them. They can be "people pleasers" as a way to avoid rejection. Taller and often collapsed.

"MASOCHIST"



Masochist: The Masochist type has a low self-esteem and does not want to rock the boat. She will often be heavier with a low energy. She goes along with what others are doing. She wants to play it safe all the time rather than take risks.



Compensating Oral: This character is an off-shoot of the Oral character. On the inside they exhibit Oral characteristics like fear of abandonment and attachment to relationship. On the outside they have a larger persona of independence and adventure. They appear larger than life on the outside but will crumble if they experience rejection or abandonment.



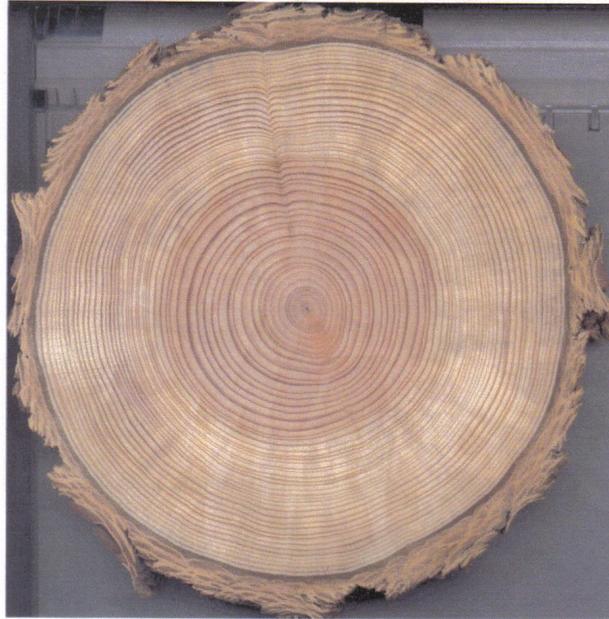
Rigid: A Rigid type is all about control. They need to have absolute control over their lives and struggle to let go of control. They tend to not be able to let go of control of their emotions and at times will try to control the world of others. Shorter and more compact.



Psychopathic: This particular character needs to have power at all times. Loss of power feels like a death experience to them. They are often narcissistic and feel like the world revolves around them.

Lesson Ten

Who is the One Speaking?



When a fifty-six year old man and a fifty-two year old woman engage in a regular screaming match one might think that this behavior is just a normal way for two adults to interact. Screaming and losing one's temper just seems like a routine occurrence. What most people do not realize is that the adult in us is probably not the one communicating. A younger wounded part of ourselves is the one who's voice is being heard.

For instance, just like the long history of a tree can be traced by the rings in the tree so too can our lives. In tree rings one can determine when there might have been a drought, a flood or any other type of trauma at that time. We hold trauma in our bodies as well just like tree rings.

When that fifty-six year old man raises his voice it is because his wounded seven year old is speaking. He is frozen in a place where his parents never supported his feelings and never really heard him. His younger self is still speaking (and shouting), hoping to be heard. The fifty-two year old woman is responding from her wounded six year old who was constantly shamed and belittled by her mother. Her strategy is to tune out the other person and bully them, just as if she were still speaking to her mother as a six year old. When we speak to each other as adults we are not always coming from our adult self.

Exercise

Who Are You When You Speak?

Exercise:

Attempt to identify who you are when you are speaking and what is the situation you are mimicking

Examples:

- 1. Every time I speak to an authority figure I sound scared because my Catholic priest growing up shamed me for forgetting a prayer during confession.**
- 2. When someone tries to tell me I am doing something wrong I just tune it out as all I hear is my mother being bossy.**
- 3. As a male, when speaking with women I become shy as I want to be liked as if I were my nine year old trying not to feel abandoned by my mother.**
- 4. As a female, when I hear a strong male voice I crumble as I become scared that I will be hurt as if my father were coming to punish me for staying out too late at night.**
- 5. As a male I cannot say "NO" to women as if my younger self were afraid of making mom mad.**
- 6. I am afraid to take charge and be assertive as I am reminded by my thirteen year old self that I might be punished or shamed for making a mistake. I might have gone through all of high school and college never wanting to raise my hand because as an eighth grader my classmates made fun of me when I got an answer to a question wrong.**
- 7. I argue all the time with my neighbor because he always makes me feel like he is right and I am wrong. My twelve year old self is active just like when my grandfather would tease me about how stupid I was.**
- 8. My older brother thought he was a "know-it-all." Nowadays when someone tries to make me wrong I feel this enormous pressure to have to win at any argument and prove that my brother was wrong. My present day intellectual battles are just a reaction to try to defend myself from being annihilated intellectually.**

Lesson Eleven

How to Disagree



Everyone is not supposed to think exactly like everyone else. There are bound to be disagreements in life. That could be in personal relationships, business, politics or in sports. Disagreement is a large part of communication.

How we disagree is another whole matter. Many people will shame or belittle others who have a different opinion. Some will use name calling or constant interruption with those whom they disagree with. Some people are apologetic for disagreeing as if their opinion is worth less than someone else's opinion.

The art of disagreeing is just that—an art. How do you hold face and express your opinion while it might be contrary to another's opinion?

Exercise

How to Disagree

What not to do when disagreeing

Exercise: How many of the following methods do you use when you disagree with someone?

- 1. Interrupt someone**
- 2. Raise your voice**
- 3. Call them names (idiot, uninformed, ignorant, etc.)**
- 4. Use labeling (example: You are a bigot, racist, anti-Semite, etc.)**
- 5. Apologize (example: "With all due respect...")**
- 6. Justify your position**
- 7. Need to win**

What to do when disagreeing

Exercise: Try something new

- 1. Be firm (I disagree) (I do not share the same opinion)**
- 2. No justification is needed for why you disagree**
- 3. No apologies needed**
- 4. No need to debate or try to change someone's mind**
- 5. No need to win**
- 6. It is okay to disagree**

Lesson Twelve

Labeling



When you communicate using labeling you have essentially shut down all forms of communication and now you are stuck in a stance of assumptions and stereotyping. Dialog and communication can no longer exist.

A label is a way to demonize someone or to pre-judge them. Some of the common labels used in our current society to pre-judge people are the following; bigot, racist, veggie, anti-Semite, Communist, left-coaster, Bible toter, misogynist, man-hater, pervert, wife-beater, fascist, anti-fascist, radical, whore, neurotic, tree hugger, gun lover, psycho, bitch, retard, air head, polarizing, conspiracy theorist or socialist.

You can never know for sure what is in the heart or mind of someone. When you label someone you are making giant assumptions. While you can observe one's behavior you cannot know another's inner truth.

Exercise

We live in a society where we routinely use labels as a way to tell stories. These labels are often completely incorrect and in the meantime we have shut down our lines of communication. Most people are ignorant in what terms actually mean and will use a label without verifying an exact definition.

Exercise:

1. When do you use labels in your life in an attempt to communicate?
2. Do you understand the definition of the label you are using?

Example:

Racism: a sense of superiority over others based on one's race, religion or biology. Sensing that one is cleaner or smarter than another based on biological data.

Ethnocentrism: Feeling most comfortable being around others just like you and feeling most uncomfortable being around others who are different from you.

3. How successful is your communication when you use labels to express yourself?
4. How can you more accurately describe a situation without using a label?
5. Has someone placed a label on you and how does that make you feel?

Lesson Thirteen

Non-verbal Communication



Not all forms of communication are verbal. One of the most prominent ways we communicate with each other is through non-verbal means or body language. Body language can often hold far more truth than actual words. What we say with our bodies can tell a story all to itself.

The mind will often lie. The body will tell the truth. You might be saying one thing but your body language is saying something completely different. You might feel uneasy in a conversation when you are hearing certain words but the speaker's body language is telling a different story.

Authenticity occurs when the words match what the body is saying. Honest communication occurs when we are not trying to deceive with our words, only to have our body language call us out.

Exercise

When you are communicating with others are you telling a different story by the body language you present?

How many of the following body language cues do you participate in when engaged in conversation?

- 1. Roll your eyes**
- 2. Make faces**
- 3. Cross your arms**
- 4. Look off in the distance**
- 5. Do not make eye contact**
- 6. Keep your sunglasses on**
- 7. Play with your hair**
- 8. Turn sideways**
- 9. Distract yourself with something else (like a phone)**
- 10. Look down**
- 11. Breathe irregularly or sigh**
- 12. Fall asleep**
- 13. Cover your face with your hand**
- 14. Click a pen**
- 15. Wiggle your leg**

Lesson Fourteen

Rules for Fighting



Some relationships are built around fighting. A conflict emerges and one side erupts while the other side reacts in battle. The conflict may or may not be resolved but both parties remain locked in reaction stage.

Fighting in a relationship is not the preferred method to resolve conflict but it does happen. Normally both individuals are reacting to an unresolved sub-personality that they bring out in each other (i.e. the need to win, the need to not lose face, the need to have control, the need to be strong etc.). These unresolved parts of ourselves will emerge unless we look deeply inside about why we react and engage in fighting.

It takes two to fight. If one person is strong enough not to engage then there cannot be a fight. You just walk away. However, if you decide that fighting is part of your relationship then you will need to have some rules in regard to how to fight with each other. The goal is not to destroy each other but to resolve conflict.

Exercise

What are some of the rules that you feel important if you have a relationship where fighting is part of that process?

Some examples are below.

1. No physical harm to anyone
2. Do not let the children get in the middle of things
3. Do not gang up on your partner (call your mother, call your therapist)
4. Do not go to bed angry
5. Do not call each other names
6. Be clear about why you are upset and do not be elusive
7. Express your emotions
8. Make "I" statements like "I feel..." and not "You did..."
9. Look for solutions or common ground
10. Don't generalize
12. Take ownership of what you said or did
13. Take one issue at a time
14. Don't interrupt
15. Don't threaten ("I will divorce you if...")
16. Listen
17. Don't keep score
18. Seek professional help if you cannot resolve things

Lesson Fifteen

Gossip



Gossip is one of the lowest forms of communication. To gossip means to talk negatively about someone else, usually to prop yourself up or for entertainment. This practice has been more common in today's age of social media where content is primarily derived from gossip.

When you gossip you are not only trying to tear someone else down but you are pulling yourself down as well. To gossip means to feel proud in others' failures or misdeeds. You are looking for others to fail and then you can jump on them to lift yourself up.

Gossip can be considered mind poison. You are polluting your mind when you fill it up every day with gossip. Gossip is often filled with assumptions, judgments and shaming. Is this really the life you want to be leading?

Exercise

In what ways do you gossip each day?

- 1. Neighbors**
- 2. Family**
- 3. Friends**
- 4. Colleagues**
- 5. Bosses**
- 6. Celebrities**
- 7. Athletes**
- 8. Media**
- 9. Politicians**
- 10. Room mates**
- 11. Teachers**

Why is it important that you continue to gossip?

- 1. To feel accepted by peers**
- 2. To be informed**
- 3. To feel better about yourself**
- 4. To get a good laugh at others' expense**

Lesson Sixteen

Uncomfortable Situations



Life is not always pleasant. There are times when your communication skills will be challenged beyond everyday ordinary relating. As if your day to day communication skills were not enough, special skills are required for many other circumstances.

These uncomfortable situations might be some of the following: death of a friend or family member, divorce, break up of a relationship, firing from a job, illness of someone close, telling a child she is adopted, needing to relocate to another town or many other situations.

These can be shocking times when we find ourselves at a loss for words. Being prepared with some simple strategies will help when those uncomfortable situations arise.

Exercise

1. Have you found yourself in a place when you have had a loss for words? What would you have said differently while looking back at the situation?

2. How many of these simple phrases might you use?

a. I am sorry for your loss.

b. How can I help?

c. What do you need?

3. Helpful hints:

a. Reassure people that they will be okay

b. Be clear and precise:

Example: "You look sick. Can I help you outside?"

c. Find the right time and place to deliver information

Example: Breaking up with someone while they are at work or through an email or text is not appropriate

d. Provide a sense of hope

e. Be realistic

Example: "You have been in an accident. Help is on the way. You have some significant injuries. We are doing the best we can to fix the situation."

f. Have empathy for their situation/show compassion

Example: "Yes I am breaking up with you. This is the best for both of us."

Lesson Seventeen

To Praise or to Complain



Are you a complainer or an "uplifter"? Do you spend your life looking for things to complain about or do you look for opportunities to praise others? The choice is yours.

The intention of language is very clear by your word choices and your attitude. A complainer will most always be pointing a finger at someone and saying "You" quite often. Example: *"You are in my way and why don't you move."* An uplifter will use more "I" statements and have more compassion. Example: *"I am very impressed with your dedication to the project."*

Whether you spend a life praising or spend a life complaining is entirely up to you.

Exercise

1. Are you a complainer or an "uplifter"?

2. What do you normally complain about?

Examples:

- 1. Government and politicians**
- 2. Lack of money**
- 3. Spouse**
- 4. Children**
- 5. Traffic**
- 6. How tired you are all the time**
- 7. The house is never clean enough**

3. How often are you an uplifter?

Examples:

- 1. "What a great job you are doing."**
- 2. "You look really nice today."**
- 3. " I appreciate you."**
- 4. "I like what you have done."**
- 5. " You are amazing!"**
- 6. "Thanks for helping out."**

Lesson Eighteen

Communication Strategies



Many times we have developed an overall strategy for our communication. This is based on our early childhood where we learn how to get our needs met in many different ways.

These techniques of communication could be some of the following: *bullying, negotiating, manipulating, score keeping, passive/aggressive behavior, belittling.*

Someone who uses bullying as a strategy is a person who needs to win in conversation. He is often aggressive, egocentric and is a poor listener. A manipulative style is someone who will tell you to your face what you want to hear and then when you are gone do something entirely different.

Exercise

1. How often do you use communication strategies?
2. What are some of those strategies that you might use?

Examples:

a. Bullying

"This is just the way it is. I make the rules here."

b. Manipulation

Said to someone's face, *"You look great"* but behind their back you criticize their looks.

c. Lying

"I did not steal the cookie" when in fact you did.

d. Passive/Aggressive

"Honey, I found your hair as I was vacuuming," referring to her balding husband.

e. Negotiating

"But Mom, you let my brother Joey go to the concert when he was fifteen."

d. Score Keeping

"I will take out the trash if you clean up the kitchen."

e. Shaming

"You are not very good at what you do."

f. Misinformation

Saying *"I have a brand new beachfront resort that you will want to invest in,"* when you just want to take someone's money

3. How can you be more clear in your communication without having to resort to underhanded strategies?

Resources:

- 1. *How To Be An Introvert In An Extrovert World,*
by Michele Connolly**
- 2. *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*
by Susan Cain**
- 3. *The Highly Sensitive Person: How to Thrive When the World Overwhelms You*
by Elaine Aron**
- 4. *Sorry I'm Late, I Didn't Want to Come: One Introvert's Year of Saying Yes*
by Jessica Pan**
- 5. *The Introvert and Extrovert in Love: Making It Work When Opposites Attract,*
by Marti Laney PsyD MFT, Michael Laney**
- 6. *Non Violent Communication,* Marshall Rosenberg**
- 7. *The Etiquette of Illness: What to Say When You Can't Find the Words*
by Susan P. Halpern**
- 8. *Parting Words: What To Say and Do When Someone Dies*
by Linda Lindholm**