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Communication

In our lives, everything is communication. And in general, all external communications are a reflection of our communication with ourselves. What do we mean with it? It means that if you do not keep an eye on your needs, if you do not listen to yourself, if you're not very conscious of who you are, your communication tends to be distorted. Remember that we communicate not only through what we say, but mainly, through who we are. It is easier to see this with children, they learn following your example. No matter what you say, they tend to imitate your behavior. And as we were children, we all live that process.

If we go even deeper, your communication with you, was forged through the experiences you had during your childhood. In general, we adults tend to treat ourselves the way we learned we should be treated when we were little boys and girls. Note if you say certain things to yourself that your parents, grandparents or someone important in your childhood, frequently said to you. Observe your beliefs, where do they come from? Take a look at those beliefs you accept as the Truth, without thinking about different possibilities. And remember that as children we learn from example, so we are likely to repeat the communication patterns we experienced in our homes.

If you want to heal this, my recommendation is to begin to think about the communications during your childhood. About the way adults communicated between them and with you, when you were a little kid. Maybe in your home it was necessary to shout in order to be heard. Or maybe communications were focused on negative aspects. Perhaps, as a child, you heard things like "you're not good for this..." or "you always leave things unfinished" and this way, you started acquiring some beliefs. At some point, you communicate to yourself that this was the truth. And you probably adopted the communication techniques used by adults. Sometimes it's shouting, sometimes is not saying what you feel. In other families talking about emotions is natural. Some people use jokes to evade important issues, is the norm. How were your family communications like?

The important thing is that today you have new choices available. First, you need to observe which behaviours and beliefs work for you and which ones limit you, so you can begin to choose consciously. If you've communicated in a certain way for many years, you probably don't know how to do it in a different way. So begin to explore. And again, it starts with you. Start improving what you say to yourself. Start to pay attention to your self-talk. Be more aware of that dialogue and direct it towards supporting what you want. Judging yourself, not recognizing your value, or blaming yourself, rarely creates happy results. Try to communicate as if you were your best friend. That one that will be by your

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side even in the worst situations, assisting you on succeeding. How would it be if you could treat yourself that way?

Practice having a few moments of silence a day. Many times we live so accelerated, hurry and focused on the external things, that we do not have time to listen ourselves. We are not aware of our bodies, our minds or our emotions. Pay attention to the messages you have for yourself. And use that information to take better decisions. All the wisdom and clarity you need, reside within you. But you need to pay attention to it. You can hardly listen to someone else when don't even know how to listen to yourself.

Now, let's get into that too, how can we communicate with others? Here are some good keys to communicate effectively:

Understand. Understanding is the foundation for communication. Each human being has learned methods to communicate, from his own experience. Based on our beliefs, we have determined what's true, we've shaped our personality, have felt fears and have created ways to protect ourselves. So, we conformed what we call paradigms. And, as the experiences of each person are different, paradigms of each person are different.

Therefore, to communicate, we need to generate a common language, a language we both understand. Since we live in different paradigms, we understand the English language differently. Have you said something to someone to find out later that that person understood something completely different from what you meant? Basically we all have had that experience. When someone listens, she/he listens through her/his paradigm. He or she does not understand your paradigm. He/she does not understand your point of view. She/he only knows hers/his. And usually, assumes HERS/HIS point of view, is the truth. To overcome this problem, we need perspective. When you look at a situation with more perspective, you may realize that everyone is defending a particular point of view. And here is where understanding is essential.

Comprising the other person's point of view. Finding out more about the way your counterpart sees the situation, standing in their shoes. And even if you do not understand much, try to comprehend the process by which this person has forged that vision of the world.

Listen. If you want to really understand and communicate, you need to listen. Most Humans Beings make assertions. We talk. And we all like to be heard. But who listens? If you want to make a difference and improve your communications: listen! It's a great way to win friends, build confidence and give appreciation to others. An excellent way to

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understand more about the other's point of view and a very intelligent behaviour. Listening gives you information and information is power.

Remember these two phrases: "You're a slave of what you say and the owner of what you keep to yourself" and "Do not say a word, unless your words are more important than silence" Keep that in mind.

Manage your emotions. We all have been through the experience of communicating something so emotionally, that the other person only heard our emotions instead of hearing our words. Sometimes a specific situation triggers our anger, and we try to stay calm, so we swallow our emotions, until the point we can not handle them anymore, and we decide to say what we feel and think. The problem is that our communication comes out with so much anger, frustration, and rage, that our interlocutor only gets to hear that: anger, frustration, rage and loses our deeper message. The most important communications, often provoke strong emotions. Therefore, it would be a good idea to communicate our affection and love first, and, when emotions show up, verbalize them instead of hiding them. All humans experience very similar emotions. When you verbalize your feelings, the other person can empathize with you.

Assume responsibility for what we you are saying.

Generic phrases, or assuming what the other is thinking is rarely effective. When our interlocutor is responsible for what he says, and assumes that it is HIS point of view, when he understands that we may have a different vision and more importantly, when he wants to know about our vision... we tend to be open and receptive. That's a good way to engage a productive dialogue. Be responsible of what you say and stay open to learn from others. You may ask yourself before starting a conversation: What am I offering through this conversation?

It is also essential, especially if you're in a discussion, to respect the other person dignity. Thinking on a win- lose basis is not going to work. In relationships, when someone loses, both parts lose. The only way a relationship grows and proliferates is when both sides feel they won. When everybody is happy with the outcome. To that end, you need to think in terms of win-win rather than win-lose. Win-win means to negotiate, do not discuss about your positions and points of view (we have seen they are disparate and distant) but discuss about the common interests you both have. Think, what's the common ground for you two? What do I want to build? How can I benefit my counterpart? What does my counterpart want? And how can I benefit from it? How can we arrive at a solution that works for us both? And if you can not arrive to the solution by yourself, it's okay, you can also ask your counterpart. It can be an excellent way to engage in a negotiation. If you demonstrate openness and good disposition, the other person will probably be willing to collaborate.

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If you think, communication is a common action between two or more people. It is your choice to make that common action a wonderful experience for all of you. How could you do so? Try to establish relationships that enrich you. Try to communicate with honesty and integrity. And appreciate the one who stands in front of you.

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