



## Communication: Something Most of Us Have Never Done



In the more than 30 years that I have been working with couples, I can unreservedly say that *by far* the most critical factor determining whether a couple will stay together and how happy and fulfilled they will be with each other is their ability to communicate. If a relationship cannot talk about itself, that is if one or both persons cannot or do not talk about their actual experience of it, the relationship and the love in it will hit a glass ceiling above which they cannot rise. Both the relationship and the love between the partners must become ever expansive and refreshed if they are to remain vital, alive and rewarding over time.

For this to occur the skill and art of communication must be worked on and fine-tuned the way a master woodworker hollows a delicate and beautiful bowl out of a standard, spindly, rough-hewn piece of wood. From my observation the number of us that have the ability to effectively communicate is dramatically less than the number of artisans who can create a work of art out of ordinary materials.

What most people consider to be communication is not communication at all. It is accusation and attack. It is being right and making the other feel bad and wrong. It is portraying oneself as the victim and assigning the exclusive role of the offender to the other. Ultimately the unspoken intention that lies behind these imposters to real communication is separation not union, and attack and defense not forgiveness and compassion.

The net result of *every single interaction* that you have with a loved one is that the intimacy, trust and goodwill that you have with each other will either expand or contract. There is nothing in between. This means that relationships are dynamic. They never stand still. They grow or die with every single exchange.

If either person in any interaction in a relationship is left feeling blamed, guilty, bad, wrong, put down or flawed, not only has communication failed but the relationship has been set back, rendering the likelihood of future success in communicating even more remote.

In my view to call what you are doing when you open your mouth and speak words communication, the person who is talking must embody four particular traits or features in their delivery. To personalize them they can be stated as follows:

- 1) Am I honest?
- 2) Am I vulnerable?
- 3) Am I humble?
- 4) Are all of my statements self-referential?

If you are not honest, vulnerable, humble and self-referential when you speak it would be wiser, in my opinion, to keep your mouth shut. It just won't work! The only unknown will be how much the speaker is actually setting the relationship backwards.

Let's delve further into these courageous, brilliant and beautiful ways to make it safe for another person to be in communication with you:

1. Am I honest? – Am I being congruent with what is going on inside of me? Am I willing to be known? Am I courageously sharing my truths, feelings, needs and wants without making demands on the other person and with few or no expectations?
2. Am I vulnerable? – Am I open? Transparent? Real? Am I showing my humanity and frailties or concealing them behind a false show of certainty or strength or self-righteousness or power? Do I feel defensive or defenseless, closed-hearted or open-hearted when I share? More importantly still, even if I am convinced that I am vulnerable as I speak, how does my significant other experience me?
3. Am I humble? – Am I tentative rather than authoritarian in my delivery? Do I realize that whatever I am saying is based on the flimsiness and narrowness of my viewpoint only? Do I realize that what I am sharing are my perceptions, interpretations and conclusions only and not the Laws of the Land? How badly do I have to have the last word or final say?
4. Am I self-referential? – Am I only talking about myself? Using "I.." statements instead of statements that begin with "You..", or "You are...", or "These are your issues", or "I feel that you...".

Communication is a discipline and a skill and, like any other discipline and skill in life worth having, it is not achieved easily or overnight. Hundreds, if not thousands, of repetitions are required to become good at it. Failure and feelings of inadequacy are guaranteed. The goal is for both people to feel good after the communication and actually be happy that it took place. Not easy. Not common. But how badly do you want to keep the other person in your life? And how much do you want to share a life of peace, joy and abiding closeness with him or her? I call what I do with couples the *Work of Love*. It lives up to its name.

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# UPCOMING SEMINARS

## HEALING THE ORIGINAL PAIN OF YOUR LIFE: THE INNER CHILD SEMINAR

Many of us are aware that we are stuck emotionally or spiritually somewhere in our journey through life. These stuck places may show up as unwanted and self-defeating behaviors or symptoms such as:

- unhealthy relationships
- relationship breakdowns
- an excessive need for money, position or power
- constantly seeking the approval of others and fearing rejection
- constant, unstoppable busyness
- workaholic tendencies
- loneliness
- explosive emotional outbursts with loved ones
- dependency on alcohol, drugs, sex or shopping as a mood- enhancer
- family strife
- low self-esteem
- depression
- eating and sleep disorders
- internet addictions

All of these conditions are expressions of a soul in too much emotional pain and fear, recycling it over and over again in the present day, often onto people and in situations that have nothing to do with the original wounds which produced it.

This seminar will gently and powerfully escort you into some of the most formative moments, relationships and events of your early life so that you can identify the original source of your emotional pain and fear and learn how to heal and release it at its roots. It is my personal and professional experience that doing so can free you up in the present day to live a qualitatively new and fresh life and not just some re-enactment of your past.

**DATE: SAT / SUN, OCT. 29 & 30 2016**

## RELATIONSHIPS: THE WORK OF LOVE

In this seminar we examine ourselves as the perpetrators of pain. We examine the myriad flight and fight responses that we have employed to keep from our hearts and souls the very people we say we want to love, the very people who have committed the "crime" of loving us. This most certainly could include our love interest but we will also examine our relationship with our father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter and past loves to discover the ego patterns that have run us and our relationships into the ground. We begin to move from being baffled, righteous, or victimized by our love lives to taking 100% responsibility for the state that our most significant relationships are in. All of our dynamics and imposed barriers to real intimacy, committed love and monogamy are faced.

Only then can we discover and examine the components of a healthy, loving and mutually beneficial relationship. Only then can we discover that with courage, vulnerability, honesty and humility, we can begin to experiment with laying down our survival-oriented, fear based ego patterns and establish an entirely new base from which to interact with the people of our lives.

**DATE: SAT / SUN, DEC. 10 & 11, 2016**

**COST - \$275.00 + GST per person (deferred payment plan available)  
bursaries available to those in financial need**

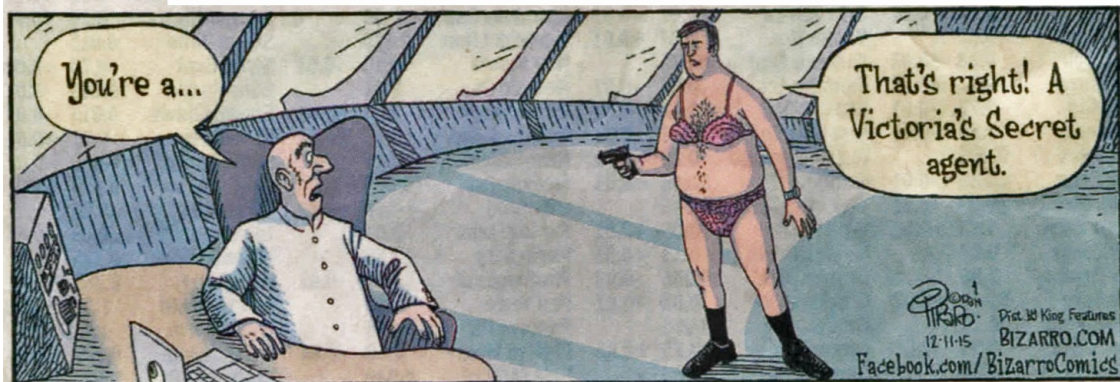
**If you have further questions or would like to register contact:**

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**BIZARRO**



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