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With Purpose Coach Fawn Miller

Group Call #32

Communication

The Fabric of Connection



Welcome to the Call #32 “Communication” workbook! In the following pages, we’re going to be covering some of the fundamental *and* high-level aspects of what works and what doesn’t when it comes to this crucial human skill.

Keep in mind that this resource - although thorough and potent - is not a comprehensive survey of the field of “Communication” - what we’re covering here are some of the principles, approaches, and tools that I have found most helpful for navigating interactions, but by no means are the *only* tips out there. I encourage you to sincerely dedicate some time, effort, and energy “trying on” these principles, *as well as* continuing to add to your communication toolbox by reading books, blogs, articles, listening to podcasts, and/or taking trainings on the topic. The more you know, the more you *grow*, and the better your interactions will *flow*:)

OVERVIEW

1. What *is* “Communication”?
2. Communication begins with YOU
3. Setting the Stage
4. Communication happens between YOU and THEM
5. How to navigate “Me → You” topics
6. How to navigate “Us → Us” topics
7. Communication “Languages”
8. What to do when things go off the rails

#1) WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

- Basic level - *“To share or exchange information, ideas, or news”*
- **Communication is about *effectively* conveying a message that you want to say so that other people understand and respond to it.**
- Listening *and* **comprehending**
- Empathy vs. judgement
- **Communication is more than just words, it also includes:**
 - HOW you say it - including your tone
 - WHY you say it - the intention behind the message
 - WHEN you say it
 - What you DON'T say
 - BODY LANGUAGE - including your facial expressions, gestures, and posture
- **NVC: Observation → Feelings → Needs → Requests**

**WHAT IS EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION?
WHAT IS “POOR” COMMUNICATION?**

Here is a SUPER informative article distinguishing and unpacking these two questions: **[“9 Effective Communication Skills”](#)** from the **www.habitsforwellbeing.com** website.

#2) COMMUNICATION BEGINS WITH YOU

- Take **FULL** responsibility for your**SELF**, including your feelings, desires, thoughts, behaviors, and actions.
- Get clear **FIRST (before or *while* interacting)**
 - Take time to explore your “Inner World”: thoughts, feelings, needs, stories, etc.
 - Use NVC
 - What do you *actually* want to communicate?
 - What is your INTENTION for the communication / interaction?
 - **REFLECT → RESPOND (vs. REACT):** What are you *actually* experiencing VS being “hijacked” by past programming, assumptions, ego, anger, resentment, triggers, etc.
 - **Set aside time for a RAW journaling session (or sessions) + “time out”:** let it ALL out, unedited, uncensored. Give yourself permission to *hear* yourSELF, even if it’s a whirlwind inside! Pour it all out!
 - **This is SO beneficial for several reasons:**
 - Gives you space and time to process your thoughts and feelings
 - Gives you time to shine the light of “awareness” on your Inner World to “Check” what’s going on inside instead of just going with the *unconscious* experience / impulses.
 - Helps you get clear about what is actually “alive” and “true” for you so that you can accurately express yourself (getting to the core of the issue)
 - Helps you get clear about what you *really* want out of the interaction

#3) SETTING THE STAGE

Pre-conversation tips: setting expectations & intentions

- **First contact: approach / contact the person at a “good” time** (to the best of your knowledge), but don't put it off waiting for the perfect moment.
 - Be mindful of the other person's world...
 - If they are busy or in the middle of doing something, or in a “mood”, probably not the most optimal time for them to be present and open to you.
 - Ideal: when their attention isn't consumed by something else, and they are in a neutral or positive mood.

 - **Then share: “*There's something that I'd like to talk to you about (and get your feedback on (if applicable)), would you be willing to let me know when's good for you?*”**
 - If you anticipate it being a short conversation, specify
 - If you anticipate that it could be a longer or more in-depth conversation, let them know that it might be longer

 - **Mention your *Intention*:** “*This is important to me because ___ and I would like to _____*”

- **Second Contact (conversation time!):**
 - **Beginning:**
 - “Soft Start”
 - “Compliment Sandwich”
 - Make it clear that you are needing to express what's “alive” for you and share your experience so that both of you are on the same page, and you are not saying that they are wrong, or judging them.
 - Requests: ex: “*Would you be willing to just listen until I'm finished sharing? That would really help my focus and help me feel heard*”
 - USE NVC

#4) COMMUNICATION HAPPENS BETWEEN YOU AND THEM

- Empathy
- Compassion
- Active Listening
- Respect
- Reflecting for clarity
- Reading body language
- Curiosity
- Request clarification (don't make assumptions)
- Beware of the "Pain Body"

#5) HOW TO NAVIGATE A "ME → YOU" TOPIC

If it's a "Me → You" topic - meaning that you want to talk to someone about something, but they don't necessarily know, or may or may not have a clue that it's something that you'd like to discuss.

- Follow the guidelines for "Setting the Stage"
- Let them know that it may be difficult for them to hear, and you are doing your best to be compassionate, and that you would like for them to have an open-mind and really listen.
- Let them know that there is no expectation for them
- Let them know that you are willing to hear their thoughts when they are ready

If it's a “US → US” topic - meaning that it is known that there is a topic, or issue that *both* parties want to discuss.

- Follow the guidelines for “Setting the Stage”
- Share intentions
- Take Turns: While honing in on your intentions, get clear about whether you would like *them* to “go first” or if *you* would like to “go first”
- If *you* first, express if you would like them to just listen, or if you would like them to comment or share their side *while* you're talking, or if you'd like them to listen, contemplate, and *then* respond.
- If you open it up for *them* to “go first”:
 - Let them know that it is a safe space
 - Ask them if they need anything from you
 - Note: Oftentimes if they express first and you use Active Listening (no cross talk, being in your head or thinking of what you want to say while they are talking, etc.), it can *really* make things smoother because they feel heard (they have the floor, you're Actively Listening), and thus aren't likely to be defensive, and are more willing to listen to your side afterward! AND, you have more info about their experience
- Be mindful of *really* tuning into their experience and humanity (as opposed to face value)

#6) WHAT TO DO WHEN THINGS GO OFF THE RAILS

- Breatheeee deep
- Notice triggers
- Express triggers honestly
- Express *care* and *safety* (“I really care about you and want us to have a positive understanding, but I’m feeling triggered and I’d like to take a 5 minute walk...”)
- Take a time out
- Turn down the “Taking things personally” meter
- Re-group the focus
- Steer toward CLARITY not RIGHTEOUSNESS
- Use “I” language
- Express boundaries and consequence
- Stay in “their world” and see where there might be a “miss”
- Take space
- Requests