

COMMUNICATION BLOCKERS

What is Killing your Communication?

When it works well, communication helps establish trusting relationships, ensures information is passed and understood, and enriches people’s lives. But all too often good communication is blocked. This can lead to misunderstandings, resentments, frustrations, and demoralization.

Everyone experiences communication issues at some point in their life. There are sixteen different behaviours that can directly block successful communication. The communication blockers are grouped into three themes, “Solo”, “Helpers”, and “Analyzers”. You will want to pay attention to which theme and blockers you use. These blockers can be the reason you are experiencing a hard time connecting with others.

Please complete the exercise below to identify your current communication blockers. Use the rating scale of “Never”, “Sometimes”, and “Always”.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THESE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS?	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
“SOLO” BARRIERS			
Avoiding Concerns – This barrier happens when you only focus on facts and avoid the feelings of the other person.			
Being Right – You will go to any length (alter facts, shout, accuse, bring up past mistakes) to avoid being wrong.			
Sparring – You argue and debate with people, the other person never feels heard because you are so quick to disagree.			
Moralizing – You create a moral judgement of the person while they are speaking which allows your own perspectives to get in the way of what the person is actually saying.			
Rehearsing – Your mind is going a mile a minute about your own internal stuff but not about what is being communicated. Some people rehearse lengthy responses; “I’ll say...then he’ll say...then I’ll say...” etc.			

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THESE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS?	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
Identifying – You take everything a person tells you and relate it back to your own experience and you start to talk about your story before they finish theirs. Everything you hear reminds you of something you have felt, thought, done, or suffered.			
Judging – You prejudge someone as stupid or nuts or unqualified, you can't pay much attention to what they are saying.			
Dreaming – Half listening and something the person says suddenly triggers a chain of private thoughts.			

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THESE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS?	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
"HELPER" BARRIERS			
Derailing – Switching the topic when it appears the conversation may be getting too emotional or going down a path that you are not interested in.			
Sending Solutions – Looking to solve a problem that may or may not be there, you are always ready to help and make suggestions. You only have to hear a couple sentences and you begin to search for the right solution.			
Placating – You want people to like you, so you agree with everything. You want to be nice, supportive and easy to be with. Sounds a bit like "right,...right,...absolutely,...I know of course you are..".			

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THESE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS?	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
"ANALYZER" BARRIERS			
Comparing – You are always trying to assess who is smart, more competent, and more emotionally healthy, you or the other person.			
Mind Reading – Trying to figure out what the other person is really thinking and feeling. You are distracted by hunches or your intuition which have little to do with what is trying to be communicated by the other person.			
Diagnosing – Instead of listening to the substance of what's being said, we play emotional detective, looking for hidden meaning and motives.			
Filtering – You listen to some things but not everything.			
Excessive or Inappropriate Questioning – Always searching for a question to ask, potentially takes the focus off a more formal response from you.			

These sixteen communication blockers can harm relationships. Do you know what is blocking your communication? Once you become aware of your communication blockers you can begin to make changes if you see that you may be part of the problem. Select 1 or 2 blockers to mindfully remove, share, and discuss this exercise with the people in your life.

My Communication Blockers I will work on removing are:
