

TEACHING NOTES (underlined words indicate answers for the handout)

Session V — Communication: How Can I Learn To Communicate With My Companion?

## INTRODUCTION

Now that I understand what marital communication is, talking and listening, and what some of the hindrances are, how can I learn to properly communicate with my spouse?

I must first understand what are the five levels of communication.

I. What are the five levels of communication?

A. Level 1 - This is the lowest level of intimacy.

At this level couples give out facts and other information about their day or other activities.

B. Level II - This is a low level of intimacy but up from level 1.

At this level couples share ideas of other people.

C. Level III - This is the moderate level of intimacy.

It is at this level where you begin to share you own ideas and opinions.

At this level you begin to take a risk by expressing what you think. You even ask for a response of the other partner, like where did you get an idea like that?

D. Level IV - This is the high intimacy level.

At this level you begin to share personal information and emotions.

This is where you open up and talk about your childhood and things that have happened to you.

E. Level V - This is the highest level of intimacy.

\* At this level you willingly and freely share who I am. You willingly share your feelings and emotions. You willingly share with someone who cares about you.

The question I want to ask right at the beginning of this session is what level do you communicate with your companion.

One of the great problems in communication is the fact that too many couples are not on the same level in their communication level.

Women generally have the tendency to be able to access their feelings easier than a man does.

As a result, the woman can go to a higher level quicker than a man.

## II. What is the best time of the day to talk to each other?

This may seem to be very simplistic, but it is very practical and profound.

If you are not communicating very much to your companion here is a golden opportunity to learn when and how.

This lesson is not trying to limit anything but to simply give some valuable guidelines.

The best time to communicate is during:

A. The first four minutes of your day when you are both awake.

\* I realize this will vary with some because some are morning people and some are night people.

\* In this case, the important thing is to honor and respect each other's uniqueness.

B. The last four minutes before you depart from each other for the day.

C. The first four minutes when you see each other again.

D. The last four minutes at the end of your day.

If this exercise happens well then you will experience a good day and will really enjoy each other.

## III. How can I learn to communicate to my companion?

A. We must learn how to speak each other's personal learning style language.

In order to accomplish this you must understand what each other's style is and work towards talking the same way.

If you do not match their same style, then they may not respond to you.

Here is a list of the different kinds of learning styles.

1. One learning style is to be visual.

\* In this style, the person learns better with what they see with their eyes.

- \* They need to see what is going on.
- \* They need to see the big picture.
- \* They want to show you or just look at it.

2. The second learning style is more auditory.

- \* This is where they want to listen to what is going on.

One couple conveyed this message to me in confidence. They were coming home one night and the husband was hungry and wanted his wife to fix him some eggs.

But he also wanted to make love to her. As she was preparing to fry his eggs she told him you can't have eggs and make love too.

He turned off the frying pan.

What he heard he truly understood and did what needed to be done to communicate to his partner.

3. The third learning style has to do with how you feel about something.

- \* This communication level is affected by how a person feels about the matter.
- \* They may respond, "This doesn't feel right."
- \* Feelings are real and you must take them seriously.

4. The fourth learning style is about extroverts.

- o These are the people that have to talk in order to think.
- o They get their energy from other people.
- o They like to brainstorm out loud.
- o They need affirmation from others.
- o Anyone here married to an extrovert???

5. The fifth learning style is about introverts.

- + Probably the best way to approach an introvert is to give them time to think.
- + Extroverts have to talk to think while introverts have to think to talk.
- + Introverts are drained by being with people.
- + They get suspicious about compliments in public.
- + They give more compliments to extroverts.

What does this kind of information do for couples?

It simply helps them understand each other and to learn how to have a happier marriage.

6. The sixth learning style is about the Rambler.

- \* The Rambler is one who starts a sentence and goes on a bunny trail around the barn constantly taking detours.

- \* Women have a tendency to do this.

7. The seventh learning style is the straight arrow.

- o This is the person who speaks from point 1 to point 2 to point 3 to point 4.

- o What they say is right to the point.

- o Two Ramblers really enjoy each other. Whereas a straight shooter can get weary of all the rhetoric.

My wife can go on and on about her job. I am more of a straight shooter.

The important thing is to learn to relax with each other and accept the fact that it is ok to be different.

B. We must try to understand the differences between males and females.

Our styles are different because we are different because we have gender differences.

Let's look at how we are different. The first gender difference is:

1. Our brains are different.

- \* Women will use 40% more brain connectors than will men.

- \* Women will use more of the left and right side of their brains at the same time.

- \* Men are more goal oriented where women are more relational.

- \* To men, cleaning out the back yard is task oriented and not for fellowship.

- \* Men's brains are compartmentalized and women's brains are one big container that carries everything altogether.

The second gender difference is:

2. Our responses are different.

There are responses or gender statements which frustrate the man and some that frustrate the woman.

One thing for sure is they are different statements.

Let me share some statements that could be very frustrating in marriage.

He says...chill out – she says...I will be ready in a minute.

He – You don't know what you are talking about.

She - Why don't you ask for directions.

He - I'll take care of that later.

She - Do you want me to repeat myself?

He - You don't understand.

She - If you would only have listened the first time.

He - Oh, come on, that makes no sense at all.

She - Please turn the radio off while I am talking.

He - Where did you get that idea?

She - You have a one track mind.

He - Don't be so emotional.

She - Don't you care?

He - It costs too much. Did you check?

She - The kids learned that from you.

He - Go ask your mother.

She - I have a headache.

He - Oh, you're just like your mother.

She - You weren't like that before we got married.

He - I thought you were taking care of that.

She - Why don't you call a repairman?

He - Aren't you ready yet?

She - It is your decision.

He - You're nagging again.

She - You didn't hear a word I said.

He - Is this PMS time again?

She - You don't have any feelings.

He - Get to the point.

She - You don't understand me.

He - This is not a good time.

She - I don't want to talk about it.

He - Can't you just forget it and go on?

She - Why are you doing it that way?

He - Is this one of those menopause times?

She - You are so critical.

?? What are some statements you have heard that can really frustrate you?

The purpose of understanding this is to work toward understanding each other better.

The third gender difference is:

3. Women are usually the expander in most relationships.

Women have the ability to go on and on and on with all of the minute details.

Where men are more likely to give the bottom line.

The result is we want our companions to communicate like us.

The problem is we normally marry the opposite of what we are.

Normally in 75% of the marriages the woman is the expander.

4. Men are usually the condenser in the relationship.

This means that the men give the readers digest version of the incident and not the full scale novel version.

Most men are condensers.

Let me explain it this way. There was a couple who were meeting with a counselor whose problem was the wife wanted the husband to be more expressive in his feelings.

For instance, when they would go out to eat she would go on and on about how well she liked it. He would use the words, it was "fine."

The counselor turned to the husband and asked him on the scale of 1-10 where would fine be? He said around 8 or 9. And then he said let me tell you three reasons why it was a 9.

The wife was very happy because now she knew how her husband felt.

The problem was they wanted each other to be like themselves.

The solution was each of them needed to adjust according to each other's communication style and gender.

## CONCLUSION

Communication in a marriage is extremely important. Without proper understanding and adjustments many marriages will experience great difficulty and possibly split up.

Communication is the key to the success of your marriage!