

Title: Communication - A Phenomenon

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In the previous chapter, we spoke about effective communication. In this chapter, we will go into detail about what that actually entails. Whenever you communicate with anyone, you will realize the other person is continuously missing your point for one reason alone. That reason is unclear communication. This is a phenomenon that's very prevalent in parent and child communication, especially grown-up children. Effective communication requires clarity. You need to make sure your child completely understands and doesn't get the wrong meaning. Grown-up children are quite sensitive and can easily be influenced by others. Teenagers are more vulnerable in the category of grown-up children. It's kind of a time of self-discovery for especially teenagers.

Let's talk about teenagers here first. When they enter middle and high school, later on, they start seeing themselves going through a lot of changes. Their hormones are active, resulting in physical and even emotional changes within them. They'll face a whole myriad of issues that would include relationships with the opposite sex, crushes, confidence issues, and peer pressure, and other such issues. At these times, teenagers are also quite impressionable. They will face their first romances, heartbreaks, and breakups, and that could lead to a lot of negative behavior and depression. These are times when your teenager will want to look up to you. You should be his first point of contact when it comes to any of these issues instead of getting advice from others. Any such negative experiences can push them towards drugs and other substance abuse. You need to guide them effectively, which means clear communication. When there is clear communication, then the teenager will understand you much better and apply your suggestions and recommendations better. This also goes back to what we discussed in the first chapter. This is the time you can talk about your own days as a teenager and relate to their issues that way. You can adapt the strategies of your time to today if need be, but it needs to be explained properly.

When it comes to clear communication, it needs to be done both ways. Clear communication would require you, as a parent, to listen to your child properly. You can perhaps, as a therapist, take notes when your child is speaking to you about his or her issues at school. Let's say your teenager comes to you and is discussing a recent breakup with you. He or she is extremely heartbroken and upset. He or she feels rejected and depressed. He or she even feels that the world is caving in on them, or it's the end of the world. You need to let them vent to you completely.

Once they have done venting, you should respond to them with the utmost clarity. Be their support and lend them an ear. Embrace them if need be so they know you are there for them and feel their pain. If you have to cry with them, then do that too, so they know you both are on the same page. You need to remind them gently throughout the conversation that it's not the end of the world, and things will get better. You can help them in two ways. You can try to explain to them clearly if there is a way to mend fences with their former significant other. Or,

you can help them provide closure so they can focus on their future relationships properly with a fresh start. Empathy here is very important because you need to be the first person they come to when they have a breakup. You should guide them properly through the healing period. You should be very sensitive as they will have mood swings. This is also a time where you should be giving a lot more of your free time to your teenager. You need to make sure that if there is anything she or he is concerned about, he or she could just turn to you. What I mean to say here is that you need to put yourself in their shoes so that effective and clear communication could take place between you and them.

One way that could totally help your communication between yourself and your grown-up child be clearer is to give them complete and undivided attention. You can take them out to places where there is positivity. It could be a long drive or a walk in the park or at the beach. You should refrain from going to places where they could have gone on dates with someone they broke up with. A positive environment must be created for positive energies to flow between both of you. Your child will recognize and realize over time that you are making a tremendous effort to help him or her in their tough time. Once that happens, he or she will appreciate you and listen to you even more. That will start a chain of positive communication and will carry on hopefully when the child starts another relationship, for example.

Another example that a lot of teenagers and grown-up children face with parents is academic issues. Your teenager or grown-up child could be struggling in school, whether they're upset about a breakup or something else. It could be a lot of things, but generally, breakups do lead to confidence issues and low self-esteem. All that can affect studies too. It could be a whole bunch of reasons leading to poor academic performance. You may see your child struggling in classes and earning less than stellar grades in their exams, tests, and papers. Naturally, they may feel afraid to communicate clearly about their struggles. They would be afraid you would reprimand them for not performing well in their classes. That fear will cause them to lose more confidence and self-esteem, and that is where you, as a parent, really have to step in.

First and foremost, you will need to apply effective and clear communication with your child by first sympathizing and empathizing with them on their situation. Instead of reprimanding them, you should show concern and let them know you're with them in their academic struggles. You need to let them know that you will be with them all the way in a combined and collective effort to bring their grades up. You will speak to their teachers and professors and figure out where they are lacking and then tackle those areas. Your child needs to trust you that you will not scold them or get upset with them unnecessarily. Once that relationship of trust is formed, you will realize that your child is more confident and relaxed in communicating their academic struggles to you. You could guide them even after they pull their grades up and make sure they maintain their academic performance to at least an acceptable level. Your child will respond back to you in a positive manner too. He will realize that you are on his or her side, and then he or she will make more efforts as a way to thank you for being on their side. Positive reinforcement and encouragement can really help bolster your child's morale, confidence, and self-esteem. You need to let your child know that both of you have the same goals. You also need to help them figure out their future plans and support their passions. This way, they will always be able to maintain their confidence, morale, and self-esteem with you and when they're away from you.

These things are absolutely essential when it comes to building a positive relationship with your child. Effective and clear communication totally goes a long way, and you need to show it to them all the time.

While I may have focused on romances and breakups in this chapter, there could be other relationships that do get affected. Those could be with their school friends or your own marital partner or even teachers, for example. At every step of the way, you need to maintain that clear and effective communication and show empathy, understanding, and sympathy as well. My aim in this chapter is to explain how important it is to have a clear and positive understanding of your grown-up child and/or teenager. Clear and effective communication can help to build that bridge and make sure the bridge stays firm all the time. No matter what issues they face, they need to know at all times that you're on their side and will help them all the way. Positive reinforcement and encouragement are two ways that can truly make a difference and help build and maintain that bridge. These kinds of practices have long term benefits, and the best thing it can do is teach your grown-up child to apply the same practices with their own children when they come to parents. These kinds of practices can easily be passed on from one generation to another. I've expressed in the first chapter that the more positive energies are between yourself and your grown-up child, the more he or she will want to be close to you. They will turn to you whenever they face any issue at home, school or elsewhere.