



October News

STRAIGHT TALK: Communication Tools for Success

"Communicating without a desired outcome is like taking a trip without a destination. If you don't know where you are going how will you know when you get there?" - katie

PART I: Five Essential Ingredients to Effective Communication

Couples rank improved communication as the #1 area in which they feel their relationship could benefit. The good news is that refining our communication skills not only has a positive effect on our intimate partnerships, it improves our relationships with family members, friends and co-workers as well.

So the next time you have an issue to discuss with someone important to you, try any one (or all) of the following communication tips. Then see if you notice a change in how the people in your life are responding to you.

1. *Be specific.* For this tip, let's use the example of Judy and her partner, Lorne. Judy keeps asking Lorne, to put his dirty dishes in the dishwasher instead of in the sink. She has begged, bargained and badgered but is getting nowhere. Why? Her request sounds specific enough, right? Well, not really. In order for Judy to increase her success in having Lorne change his behaviour, she will also want to share with him *specifically why* she would like the dishes put away. This strategy works because understanding our partner more fully, more often than not, leads to greater compliance. For example, Judy could say "When I come home from work and see dirty dishes in the sink it makes me feel stressed out. My mom worked all the time when I was a kid and our home was always very chaotic and messy. This may seem silly to you, but dirty dishes left in the sink remind me of those times and I feel like I can't relax. It would mean a lot to me if you could help me keep our home tidy by putting the dishes in the dishwasher instead. Are you willing to do that?"





2. *Keep it simple.* When sharing a concern we often make things very complicated for our partner. The expression “Why say in 25,000 words what you can say in 10?” definitely holds some weight here. While women *tend* to speak more words than men to send the same message, I think we’ve all met a man or two who can hold his own in this area! In order to keep your partner interested and engaged, shorten up the discussion and ask directly for what you want. **Extra Tip:** Act as if packing a suitcase for a trip. Before your discussion, plan in your head all that you want to say and then “unpack” half of it.

2. *Be ready for a different outcome.* Sharing how you feel about something or making a request for a change in behaviour does not always mean you will have the outcome you desire. Remaining flexible to a “compromise” or even “agreeing to disagree”, are also great outcomes of effective communication. **Extra Tip:** To increase your chance of achieving your desired outcome, keep shame, blame and negativity out of your discussions.
4. *Do as much listening as talking.* While it may have been your idea to initiate a conversation, you can be sure that a discussion of any depth will be triggering a response in your partner. Be sure to give your partner time to ask questions or to share their perspective. Inviting them to do so early on in the conversation will encourage a more successful interaction. **Extra Tip:** Be interested in what their needs and desires are and they will be more interested in yours.
5. *Have fun.* Communicating effectively does not have to feel like work. Add humour when appropriate, make light of practicing the techniques and laugh at yourself as often as possible to keep the challenge of improving your communications skills fun!

Stay tuned for more *Straight Talk* in November News. In that issue we will share tips on how to give effective feedback to a partner, child, friend or work-mate.

Happy Thanksgiving!

UPCOMING SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

NOTE: There is no availability for other workshops offered by Hina Coaching & Seminars this fall. However, the following remain open for registration:

FREE IMAGO INFORMATION TELECLASSES

These Information Sessions are for **Singles and Couples** and introduce **IMAGO**, the work of **Oprah's** favourite relationship therapist: **Dr. Harville Hendrix** (author of "**Getting the Love You Want**").

During the introductory session, you will find what you can do **NOW** to create the relationship of your dreams!

Please Register On-Line
www.hinacoaching.com

UNDERSTANDING IMAGO LOVING RELATIONSHIPS FOR SINGLES AND COUPLES

Sunday Series Wellness Workshops
Sunday, October 25th, 2009
12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
@ **Body Harmony Yoga Studio**
#301 - 972 Marine Drive, North Vancouver
www.bodyharmony.ca

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Come join us in the tranquility of the Body Harmony Yoga Studio to explore:

- **What is Imago?**
- **Why does Imago work so well?**
- **What are some predictable stages of relationships?**
- **What can be done to dissolve conflict in a relationship?**

Pre-Registration is Required

TO REGISTER call 604-929-9642 or email: lori@bodyharmony.ca

See www.hinacoaching.com Seminars & Workshops for other upcoming events. In the meantime, if you want to experience more of Imago, we highly encourage *couples* to take one of the *Getting the Love You Want* workshops offered here in Vancouver (visit www.imagovancouver.com for dates and more details).