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“The Golden Rule” of communication and connection

 by USA WIRE STAFF — July 21, 2023 in Business Reading Time: 8 mins read



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Communication, how *does one* communicate? Maybe a better question to ask is, what is true communication, and how do I know I’ve achieved it? In discovering how to build a strong

and healthy relationship, we must realize it requires us to be teachable. Yes, you got it, learning has everything to you with you first. In my book; “Sit Down and Shut Up,” Finding Your Voice In An Insensitive World; I talk about taking responsibility for our lives regardless of our circumstances. When thinking about communicating with others, please always be kind and respectful. Showing value and interest rather than just wanting to get or give information.

Relationship is built within just seconds depending on several key factors. Your posture and the look on your face often tell others whether you are interested or you’ve already checked out. Your eyes give way to your unspoken thoughts about someone or a situation. The tone of your voice, the words you speak, how your dress, how you carry yourself. These are all ways people communicate.

So, my question is, do you want to know how to truly communicate, and if so, are you willing to take action in learning how? Remember, we all communicate, but the difference is very few of us are willing to connect. I know you’re probably thinking, now wait a minute, sometimes I only have a quick minute, if that, just how much time will this take? I understand. Once you learn the steps to connecting and most learn it quickly because once a person understands the value of connection, they will make it a part of their everyday life. Whether at home, school, the office, business transactions, or within their community at large.

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I applaud those individuals who will take the time to examine themselves first and choose to understand what they are expecting to learn by applying the skills of connection. Those who will take personal responsibility for their words, actions, leadership, or mentoring roles. Overall responsibility for the outcome of applying practical skills to achieve their goal ultimately depends on the person, NOT others. I think it’s most important to look within before we look outwardly. Ask others how they see you communicating, they may have great insight to share with you.

So, let's get back to the question of what is true communication. Some say it's the words you use or your expressions, body language, or tone of your voice, and while these are all good, there is one missing element "CONNECTION." Most think because you take the time to tell others what your needs are and your thoughts on any given subject, few take time to lean in and be present by asking good questions with a desire to gain good or needed information. You may want to ask yourself what is it I'm looking for when I ask questions? Do I want to know more about the person, their experiences, talents, insights, or am I only interested in me and getting the information I want or need so I can move on?

Even though you *think* you're keeping your thoughts to yourself, remember what your physical body language is saying.

Real and authentic communication starts with a desire for true connection. I am sure most of us have had the experience where someone comes up to us in passing and asks the question, "How are you today?" BUT in reality, they readily don't care. It's just a formality, something we say in passing, not really wanting or expecting an answer. So why do we ask? If you think it's just being polite, it isn't unless you wait and care about their response, or maybe you've had this experience, someone asks why you've been down lately, then they turn and say well, that's life. OUCH, that's hurtful.

I'm often asked, "so, what's new" in the area of Communication that you can share with our audience? My answer is always a resounding NOTHING! There is nothing new! BUT, there is a good answer to the question of "How can I communicate better." In learning to connect and have healthy relationships through communication, my answer is "WE MUST GET BACK TO THE BASIC'S. So, what are the basics, the Word of God? Within scripture, communication and healthy relationships start and end with the Golden Rule.

Matthew 7:12 says:

"In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

Luke 6:31 says:

"Do unto others as you would like them to do to you..."

1 Corinthians 13 says:

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love

does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

It's important to remember that love never shames or exposes others. Communicating and Connecting with others should be guided by love and respect, honoring the other person whether you like them or not!

These scriptures are key elements of how we are to conduct our lives. Truly it's our duty to all we have the privilege of connecting and communicating with. This is a fundamental ethical principle.

There are 5 Basic Communication Styles

- Passive
- Aggressive
- Submissive
- Manipulative
- Assertive

Plus 3 you should always be aware of

- Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Visual

With all Communication Styles, they should be considerate of others, their expectations, thoughts, ideas, creativity, and their value, hence giving them a voice to be heard.

Statics show that approximately 80 – 85% of people come from dysfunctional homes. That doesn't mean that people don't want to communicate and connect, rather they need a safe place so that they can connect with the least amount of conflict. Keep in mind that Words are extremely powerful. I always tell people who will listen, Words ONLY do two basic things; either they build up, or they tear down. In your conversations with others, how well are you choosing your words? You can share the truth without tearing someone down. The best way to do that is to be truthful and choose your words carefully. Never shame a person; often, they will do that themselves.

Please always show value to the person you are speaking with, respect, honor, kindness, integrity, and compassion by asking good questions. Lean in, be attentive, and be present when engaged in conversation.

Ask questions that make the other person feel valued and worth your time, even though it may be a brief encounter. Look people in the eye with interest.

Here are some great tips to remember:

- Lean in and show your interest.
- Ask good questions to get information.
- Stay Focused.
- Show Value – nod your head showing interest.
- Add Value – share how you value their input (be brief).
- Present your best ideas and facts with respect.
- Be open to learning what you may not yet know.
- Remember *how* you say *what* you say Matters.

If you have not yet created your own personal Mission Statement, Personal Core Values, and Vision Statement, please take the time to do so. Having these at your disposal in your “Tool Box of Life” is key to how you will communicate and connect with others.

There are 3 main questions when people meet you for the first time or perhaps on a regular basis;

1. “Do you really care?”

When there is a mutual concern, it creates connection.

2. “Can you help me?”

No one wants to be told, but everyone wants to be invited in to be helped.

3. “Can I trust you?”

This is huge!!! Be honest regardless of whether you can help them or not.

All healthy and productive relationships are built on truth, respect, and honor. Communication is waiting to be utilized and applied through connection with the correct elements of “The Golden Rule.” Once learned, they become a way of life rather than something you put on or take off, depending on the situation.

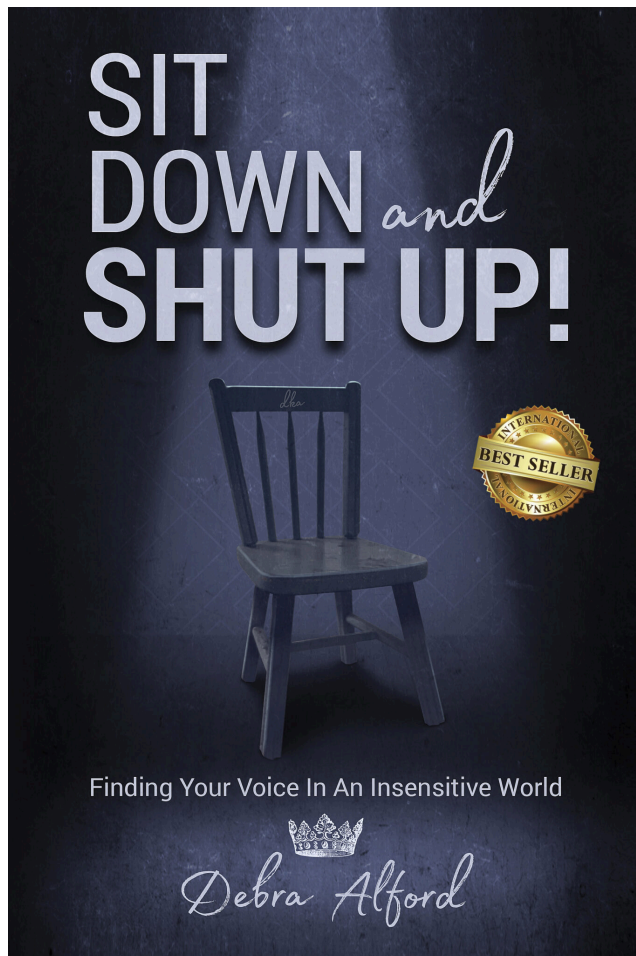
Above all, remember all good and worthwhile communication and connection rests in your court. How will you choose to communicate and connect with others starting today?

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I wish you great success on your journey in applying “The Golden Rule” of communication and connection. It can be easier than you may think! Take time to enjoy the process.

Debra Alford

For more information, please visit www.debraalford.com



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