

Communication Gaps in Relationships

Dave Jenkins, DMin, LMFT

(Doctor of Ministry, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist)

Dir, Fredericksburg Relationship Center

Ask the Doc



fredrelationships@gmail.com

Discussion

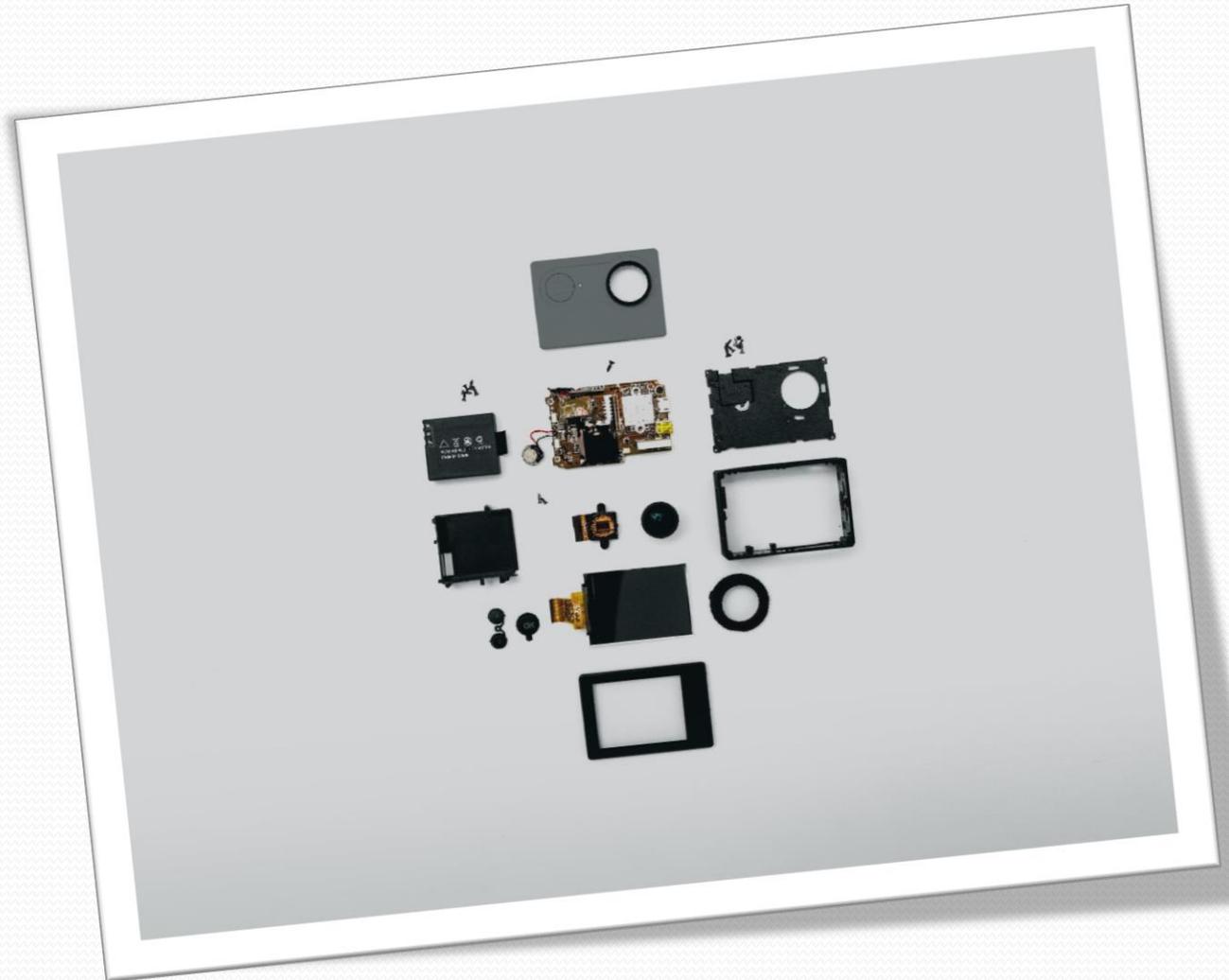
- Communication
- Mind Mapping
- Your Brain
- Building an Alliance

What is communication?



Parts of Communication

- Message
- Sender
- Receiver
- Context
- Feedback

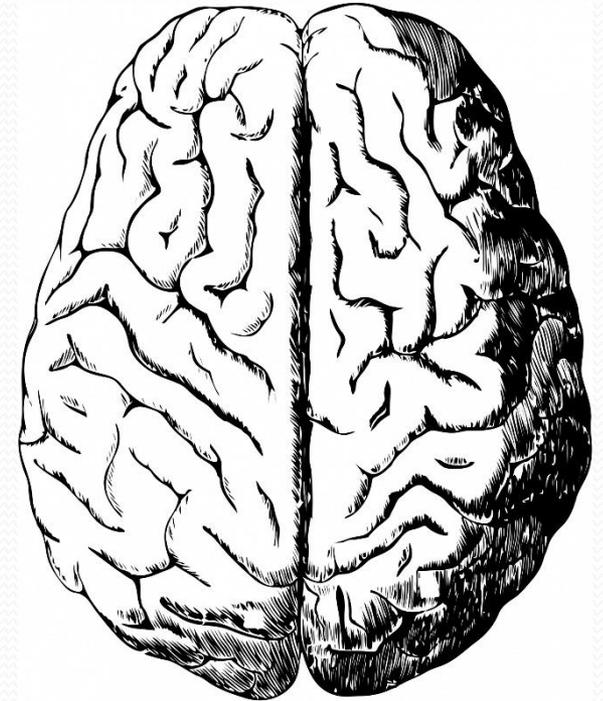


Communication Levels

- Small Talk
- Shop Talk
- Functional Talk
- Hallway Talk
- Scheduled Talk
- Pillow Talk
- Dream Talk

The Brain - Over Simplified

- Loves patterns
- Categories
- We are wired to map others
 - Desires and intentions
 - Deceptions
- Designed to make social connections
 - Mental Wi-Fi



Impression Management

- Avoiding pain
 - conflict and rejection
- Pursuit of pleasure
 - Validation and approval

How do we learn to communicate?

- Before birth
- 3 weeks old
- 2 months old
- 6 months old
- 18 months old
- 4 years old
- 5 years old
- 11 years old



Brain Wiring

- Wired for relationships and survival
- Tracks negative emotions 10 times more than positive
- Happiness is bonus

Left-side

- Logical
- Tracks time
- Verbal memory
- Facts
- Details
- Tracks patterns
- Connects the data

Right-side

- Abstract
- No concept of time
- Situational memory
- Visual
- Gut impressions
- Makes meaning from data
- Anticipates pattern

Define

- Mind Mapping
- Mind Masking
- Mind Twisting
- Traumatic Mapping
- Implanting False Beliefs



Mapping

- We map sounds also
- Attempt to beat your radar
- Wired to track anger
- Enhances survival



Template

- Family Background
- Past relationships
- Previous interactions
- Environment
- Experiences

Psychological Warfare

- Criticism
- Blaming
- Contempt
- Undermining
- Stonewalling
- Manipulation
- Acting inept
- Gaslighting



Traumatic Mind Mapping

- Happens when you glimpse the mind of your partner and you are disgusted by what you see
- It's dysregulating and can induce regression
- They failed to meet your expectations
- Mind mapping shuts down

Regression in the Brain

Left-side

- Autopilot
- Forgetful
- Denial
- Thought distortions
- Looks for uncertainty
- Confused
- Mixed messages
- Avoidant

Right-side

- Default mode
- Personalizes
- Inadequate
- Anxious
- Emotive
- Nightmares
- Critical & harsh
- Resentful



Alliance

- Combative
- Collusive
- Collaborative
- No Alliance



Building Resilience

- It's about improving your functioning
- Recognize the damage
- Self-Soothe
- Take Action



Self-Soothe

- Breathe
- Don't take your partner's regression & stress personal
- Calm your Heart
- Quiet your mind
- Elevate your functioning



Communicate

- Use a collaborative alliance
- Stop avoiding difficult conversations
- Listen without formulating a rebuttal
- Allow your partner to map you



Ouch!



- Recognize your pain points and regression
- Say when you've been hurt
- Ask your partner's intent

Collaborative Alliance

1. Confront yourself first
2. Be Truthful, even if it hurts you
3. Always fulfill your responsibilities before dealing with your feelings
4. Responsibilities are unilateral NOT reciprocal

Relationship Rules

1. Approach as if your partner is the most open and adventures person in the world
2. Allow your partner to say “no” or “not now” when they are uncomfortable
3. Don't take “no” as a personal rejection
4. Refer back to rule number 1

How You Can Help Your Partner

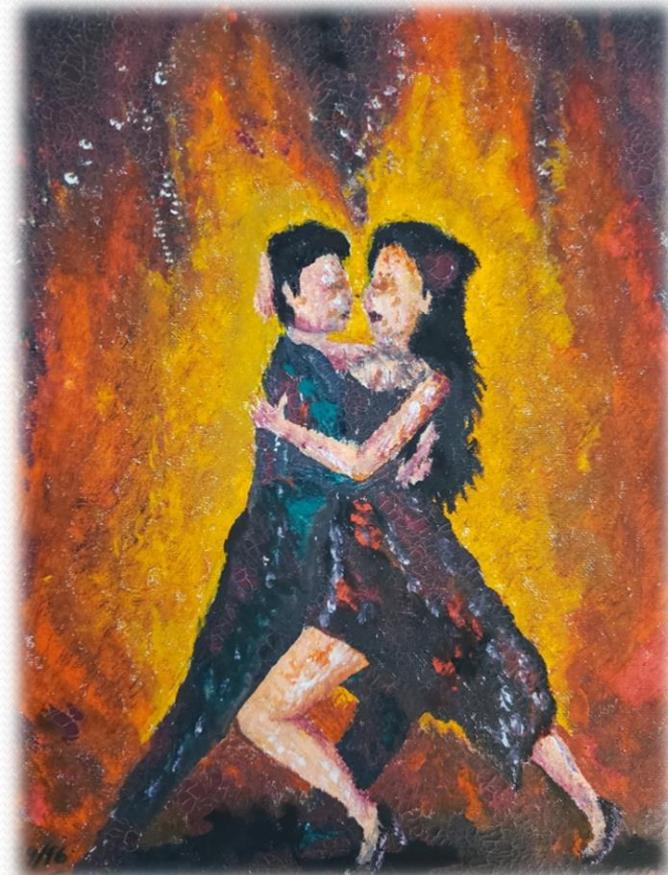
- Recognize their stress and regression
- Acknowledge the alliance
- Validate their experience
- Develop a codeword to request emotional space

Tips from the relationship Doc

- Make your partner your companion,
 - not your WORLD!
- Most relationship don't fall out of love,
 - they just go numb to avoid the emotional pain.
- Forgiveness is never deserved,
 - it's granted as grace.

What Can You Do Together?

- Something beyond your comfort zone
- The 4 Minute Eye Gaze
- Deep breathing together
- Walk together
- Dancing class together
- Sing together
- *Hug each other until relaxed
- *Deep kissing (6 – 8 sec long)
- *Eyes open during sex



Don't go blind

- *“The best of me acknowledges the worst in me. The worst of me denies its own existence.”*
- *“The best of me is capable of seeing the worst in others. The worst of me go blind to the cruelty of others.”*

References

- Brain Talk – David Schnarch
- Braving the Wilderness – Brene Brown
- Five Love Languages – Gary Chapman
- Intimacy and Desire – David Schnarch
- New Rules For Marriage – Terrace Reale
- No More Mr. Nice Guy – Robert Glover
- Seven Principles for Making a Marriage Work – John and Julie Gottman
- Saving Your Second Marriage Before it Starts – Les and Leslie Parrott
- The Dance of Intimacy – Harriet Lerner
- The Female Brain – Louann Brizendine, MD
- The Male Brain - Louann Brizendine, MD

Subject: Communication Gaps

Dave Jenkins, DMin, LMFT
fredrelationships@gmail.com

Questions

