



NewsLetter

Jean-Michel Etienne, Ph.D.

SEPTEMBER 2023



What are the causes of Communication Breakdown? Vol. 2

It is fundamental to understand that just as a beautiful garden needs care to be fruitful, any type of relationship needs a good and an effective communication to grow and remain healthy.

Have you ever had a conversation with your spouse that ended without anything being accomplished? You talk over an issue for hours, and it still ends in an uncomfortable stalemate. You walk away and wonder, what went wrong? Why couldn't we resolve this problem? If you've had one of these conversations, then you know what a frustrating experience it can be.

After a while, this communication breakdown will lead a couple to conclude that nothing can be resolved by talking together. Consequently, this couple will slowly drift apart.

If you are experiencing right now the lack and or communication breakdown in your relations, you need to identify what is causing your communication breakdown and change it before you sink any deeper into this hopelessness.

Here are a few causes of communication breakdown.

4. Bringing up the past. Many times in my counseling, couples have come in with terrible stories of how past failures have been used as a club to beat the other into submission. An intense argument has ensued, and in the end, nothing was accomplished. The only result was more anger, frustration, and, of course, greater distance between the two.

You cannot do much about the past. The two things you can do with past sins and failures is to reconcile them and then forget them and go forward. Paul looked at life this way and encouraged us to do the same.

Whether it was his failures or his successes he declared, "But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead" (Phil. 3:13). However, to forget the things which are behind you, you must first forgive and reconcile them. To gain this forgiveness, go and discuss these unresolved issues with your mate and resolve them once and for all.

Then, determine that you will never bring that issue up again to use as a weapon against your spouse. Deal only with the present. This will keep you out of trouble and make your communication productive.

5. Attacking your spouse. Have you ever had a conversation where you and your spouse spend the entire time attacking each other? One charge after another is made while the actual issue that started the conflict is forgotten. How can you stop attacking each other and start attacking the problem?

1. you must examine your own heart and acknowledge what your contribution is to the conflict. This will really help you identify the problem.
2. you must acknowledge your fault without trying to attack your spouse with condemning comments.
3. resolve the problem by asking his or her forgiveness. Lovingly seek a long-term solution so that the same problem won't erupt again. When you take these actions there will be no need to attack each other.

6. Exaggeration. Have you ever had a conversation where your spouse said to you, "You always do this" or "You never do what I ask" or "Every time you come home this happens!"? The only way to defuse this kind of dead-end communication is to stop exaggerating.

7. Lying. For communication to be effective, you must be truthful. When you discuss issues with your mate, do you twist the facts to suit yourself? Do you change the story when your spouse catches you with an inconsistency in your facts?

8. Harsh words. What is your first response when your spouse snaps at you with harsh words? Don't you want to snap right back? Speak softly with honest and balanced words. This will enable you to communicate effectively and give you the best opportunity to persuade your spouse.

9. Explosive anger. One of the most dangerous ingredients in each of these communication problems is anger. Mix explosive anger into any of the previous issues and your communication will become even more futile.

My friends, communication is the key to your marriage relationship. Don't miss the great blessing God has in store for you and your spouse as you enjoy sweet communion with each other.

Please deal with those issues which can destroy your oneness and take every opportunity to draw near to one another.