

LET'S CULTIVATE THE ART OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

As we are in a time when it appears that everyone wants their voice to be heard (especially on social media!), perhaps it's also time for us to deeply consider how we communicate, and how we can improve getting our message across to everyone? Especially important is being truthful and honest with oneself. In the UK we are blessed to live in a democratic country where we have the freedom of speech to share our opinions and perceptions.

The gift of communication is our most important tool on any level, whether written or spoken, in person, by phone, text or e-mail. As we discipline ourselves to speak our truth with focus, clearness, clarity, tact and diplomacy we can create win-win situations in all that we do. Remember as soon as a word is spoken we can never get it back! We have two ears and one mouth and when we use them in this ratio we listen twice as much as we speak. I once heard that you have 7 seconds to change a negative into a positive, whether a thought or a word, so using this tool can help you revise your conditioning and create a new you.

A great tool of self-development is to listen truthfully to ourselves and what we say, and understand whatever we think and say we create as the reality in our lives. We can discipline ourselves to be crystal clear with our listening skills and avoid interrupting people when they are in mid flow. We can re-programme ourselves to ensure every thought and word is positive, and this skill can be a powerful and positive reflection of our individual talents and abilities. As each person clearly says what they want and need, we can all work towards making everyone happy as direct, honest, balanced and equal communication helps us all know where we stand and ensures we can work together as a TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves Miracles).

We can work with our breath as an aid to help us think through and control our response in any situation. We can learn to slow down our thoughts and speech and speak quietly and slowly to calm situations and stay balanced and relaxed under pressure. For example perhaps the best influence to practise when putting young children to bed is to consciously speak more slowly and quietly and soften our words, as however you act they will mirror your behaviour. We can remind ourselves that worrying thoughts achieve nothing, and avoid a "Monkey mind" when our thoughts are constantly changing, or we have a head full of a myriad of different thoughts vying for attention. As we meditate and learn to stay calm and clear and surround ourselves with focus, clearness and clarity, naturally our levels of good communication improve.

As we begin to look at situations from the other persons' perspective we can avoid judgement, and work with understanding and compassion and clear our head when we are listening. You will notice throughout every experience people hear and retain their version of a conversation as their interpretation of an event. It is important to work with clarity and accuracy on all levels, being clear with your speech, words, phrases, volume, eloquence and use the power of your voice well. We can also practise using eye contact when talking to someone in person as this helps to keep each other focused on the moment and to magnify this special skill further.

Our smile is one of the simplest ways to enhance our levels of good and positive communication, and invite a greater level of harmony in all our relationships. It is one of our greatest gifts to help spread LOVE around our world, the shortest distance between two people and an international language. I came across this wonderful poem some time ago that says it all and it's very easy to learn and share, especially with children:

*Smiling is infectious, you catch it like the flu
When someone smiled at me today I started smiling too
I passed around the corner, and someone saw my grin,
When he smiled I realised I'd passed it on to him
I recognised that smile, then realised it's worth
A single smile just like mine can travel round the earth
So if you see a smile begin, don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic quick and get the world infected*

There is a beautiful and very listenable song sung by John Mayer called "Say" and it is used in the film "The Bucket List". The lyrics are really meaningful about communication and remind us to; "say what you need to say"! So let's embrace and practise this understanding and cultivate the "Art of Good Communication" to ensure that everyone speaks and writes with the highest levels of love, positivity, sincerity and integrity and use this skill as a art form and a strong foundation for a new level of peace in all areas of our lives and our world today?