

What's Your Mindset Newsletter

from **Helena Radeson - Your Partner to GET YOU WHERE YOU WANT!**

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Think before you talk!

Or: How to practise kindness AND get your message across.

Ever been in the situation where you say something that seems super clear to yourself and then the surprise of how very different it came across on the receiving end? How sometimes

what you say evokes feelings that were totally unexpected? Or, how about those times that after something slipped out of your mouth you immediately realized “oops, shouldn’t have..”?

Dealing with people can be hard. It’s easy to end up in misunderstandings, both at work and at home. It can be challenging anyway, and then add to that stress, different expectations and time pressure and you’ve got yourself set up for drama. In fact, interpersonal relations is one the most common obstacles to personal growth that I come across in my coaching practice. And as such, personal relationships are also key to unlocking business success, because businesses are made up of the sum of the people in it. The better each individual overcomes individual and interpersonal obstacles, the more successful the organization.

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(Side note: The two other common obstacles to personal growth, in other words what’s holding us back from growing, are: internal obstacles in ourselves and about ourselves, so called limiting beliefs, as well as practical obstacles, for example organizational or skill related limitations, plus combinations and variants of the three. Therefore, working on seeing clearly where you are, where you want to go and creating the roadmap to bridge the gap to get where you want are the key building stones in my coaching sessions. It’s all mindset related if you think about it, so mindset is what we work with.)

When identifying interpersonal relationships as a common obstacle, it is quite easy to see that our interactions with others are based on how we communicate. Or don’t communicate. In any case communication is key, verbal as well as non-verbal. Communication was always one of my favorite things, from University studies to real life applications in the business context, I find it mesmerizing the way communication defines the outcome of so many situations and I name communication awareness one of the most important building blocks for our self-worth internally and personal brand externally.

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With that said it would be a given to be naming and describing some of the most impactful and inspiring communication models and theories I’ve come across in the academic literature. But you know what, I’d like to offer a different starting point today. I’d like to go at it from not at all the academic, theoretic but another perspective. The mindfulness perspective.

In mindfulness and spiritual practices emphasis is put on verbal harmlessness as an important tool for interacting with others and living in harmony. When looking deeper into it, it becomes obvious that not only will this approach guarantee maximum consideration to your speaking partner, it will also pave the ground for our messages coming across with maximum efficiency. Efficiency in communication is essential in all contexts, it defines the success rate: it saves us time because we don’t have to repeat ourselves, it makes the message land right with the receiver at the right time, it creates no doubt because it’s based on the truth, plus it’s put forward in a considerate way. All in all, enabling a clear avoidance of conflict and high likelihood of receiver reactions matching our intentions.

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Basically, the method means measuring all our intended communication messages against these four questions:

**1. Is it kind?**

Ask yourself if what you are about to say to a person is kind. Not in a nice way kind, but in a considerate way kind. Is it?

**2. Is it true?**

Before opening your mouth, reflect on the content of what you are planning to say. Is it really true, no doubt true and nobody else's truth that you are about to speak?

### 3. **Is it beneficial or necessary?**

Even if what you're planning to say is kind and it's true, in which way will what you're about to say be helpful for the recipient? Or even necessary?

### 4. **Is it the right time and place?**

And when you've concluded 'yes my message is kind, it's true and it's beneficial for the person I'm interacting with', then still consider timing. Is this the right time and/or place to bring it up?

Four simple questions that make sure that what you say makes the difference for the recipient the way it deserves to whilst also showing compassion. This is the mindful approach for making sure the important message you have is as efficient as possible that I'd like to offer you. This is how you practice kindness AND get your message across.

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Dare to try it out?

Dare not to try it out?

Become aware of when you are in a situation when you have the choice on how to respond or communicate. It is normally especially easy to identify the good training opportunities as the ones where it's either very clear because it's an easy one (often when you've got no emotional stake) or because it's a difficult choice (often when you're agitated or otherwise emotional).

And then: Take a pause. Take a deep breath. If you can, use an excuse, go to the bathroom, go to the other room to pretend-get something. Point is, in the way that fits, give yourself a time-out from the active situation. Breathe, and reflect on what your immediate reaction was to say.

Measure it against the four questions: Is it kind, true, beneficial or necessary and in a good time and place? Be real. If it's a no on any of the four questions, reconsider. If it can't be done differently, then just don't. Don't say it. Don't blurt. Don't hurt. Because it is hurting, likely both yourself and the receiver. So be silent instead. Try it. Just today and tomorrow. See what it's like.

*“Breathe, and reflect on what your immediate reaction was to say. Is it kind, true, beneficial or necessary and in a good time and place?”*

As everything else, one step at a time in the beginning, Rome wasn't built in a day. Give yourself a chance to succeed. Which by the way when it comes to behavior changes is most usually by not making it too hard and by not doing everything all at once. Try something little out, see the result. That will stimulate your reward systems and set you up for wanting to experiment some more. Feel more result, and like that keep building your confidence step by step. (Ever notice how free trials are often a month? It's because 21 days build a habit, if you like the result during that time, you are very much more likely to continue the new habit).

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So, start with today and tomorrow, then this week, then next week... And if you slip, don't be too harsh on yourself, changing behavioral habits is against our human set up. And precisely therefore so rewarding. Because the impact will last.

Want to discuss more? Want to get supported implementing harmless communication into your team or organization? Give me a call or send me a note, I'll be excited to give you a taster

session and get you inspired!

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