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My Word!

A Lexicon of Peaceful and Powerful Responsiveness

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Do you speak the words you want to speak, especially in awkward, threatening, or unsettling situations? Do you walk away from these situations feeling a sense of power and peace?

Thinking about what happens on the outside (my word!) causes us to think about what is happening on the inside (what we are feeling). When we aim to speak with personal power and peaceful intent, we bring both to our selves.

My career as an educator and more recent experiences as a certified mediator and Martha Beck certified life coach frame this interactive session of posing possibilities.

Sources Referenced

Bennett, Peggy D. & Bartholomew, Douglas R. (1997). *SongWorks 1: Singing in the education of children*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

A moment of grace is the interval of time we take to reframe someone's behavior so that we can react with curiosity, compassion, or openness rather than judgment, annoyance, or defensiveness. Giving someone the "benefit of the doubt" allows us to delay our reaction to the comment or action with the intent of looking beyond our immediate response. (p. 210)

What if we take the position that misbehavior occurs only when a student willingly and knowingly obstructs the activity, the learning, and the lesson. (p. 208). From Charles, C.M. (1985). *Building classroom discipline: From models to practice*. New York: Longman, p. 4.

Bowling, Daniel & Hoffman, David (2003). *Bringing peace into the room*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Value conflict as a positive, seeing it as an adventure or journey, an opportunity for growth and change, an invitation to intimacy and relationship, and an opening for transformation. (p. 54)

Brothers, Joyce (Feb 27, 2005). Shame may not be so bad after all. *Parade Magazine*, 4-6.

In trying to increase self-esteem, our society may have gone too far in the other direction . . . Maybe it's time to invite the useful aspects of shame back into our culture. (p. 4)

Bush, Robert A. & Folger, Joseph P. (1994). *The promise of mediation: Responding to conflict through empowerment and recognition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Our aims for dealing with conflict need to focus on transforming people, not just changing situations. When this is our focus, the result is bigger than resolution, it is a supremely important human enterprise [that] embodies and expresses the highest and best within us as human beings. (p. 83)

Cameron, Julia. (1992). *The artist's way: A spiritual path to higher creativity*. New York: Penguin Putnam.

Crazymakers are those personalities that create storm centers. They are often charismatic, frequently charming, highly inventive, and powerfully persuasive. And, for the creative person in their vicinity, they are enormously destructive. . . crazymakers are the kind of people who can take over your whole life. . . crazymakers like drama. If they can swing it, they are the star. Everyone around them functions as supporting cast, picking up their cues, their entrances and exits, from the crazymaker's (crazy) whims. (p. 45)

Carter, Stephen L. (1998). *Civility: Manners, morals, and the etiquette of democracy*. New York: Basic Books.

DeAngelis, Barbara (1994). *Real moments*. New York: Delacorte Press.

Paying attention to the moments in your lives as they unfold is what having real moments means, moments when you are fully present, fully feeling, fully alive. (p. 5)
Mindfulness is to pay complete attention to whatever you're doing, to allow your "mind to be full" of the experience. (p. 6)

Ehrmann, Max (1927). *Desiderata* [prose-poem].

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit.

Elgin, Suzette H. (1980). *The gentle art of verbal self-defense*. New York: Barnes & Noble.

Fuller, Robert (2003). *Somebodies and nobodies: Overcoming the abuse of rank*. Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers. [the concept of rankism]

Gladwell, Malcolm (2008). *Outliers*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company.

Mitigated speech is that which attempts to downplay or sugarcoat the meaning of what is being said. We mitigate when we're being polite, or when we're ashamed or embarrassed, or when we're being deferential to authority. (p. 194)

Horn, Sam (1996). *Tongue fu!: How to deflect, disarm, and defuse any verbal conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.

Isaac, Theodore (1980). *Reconciliations: Inner peace in an age of anxiety*. New York: Berkley Books.

Attempts to get rid of unwanted feelings can cause us to fragment ourselves (p. 15). Reconciliation is a process of choosing, a hierarchy of priorities, choosing what we want more without rejecting what we want, but are not choosing. . . we become healers rather than demolition experts. (p. 24)

Lama, Dalai (1998). *The art of happiness*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Compassion is a critical component for empathy, and empathy is critical to reducing a sense of conflict and adversity. (Dalai Lama)

Orloff, Judith (2004). *Positive energy*. New York: Harmony Books.

When we do too much multi-tasking, we'll end up energetically floating above our body rather than fully inhabiting it, a limbo that promotes chronic drain (p. 44).

I don't care how deep goodness is embedded in you, it grows brighter if seen. . . When you speak to the positive in someone, that energy begins to awaken in them. . . we are all starving to have the goodness in us acknowledged. If you want to connect with someone, notice his or her assets; mention them. . . see others as you want to be seen. What results is more heart in your relationships. (p. 274-275)

Ruiz, Don Miguel (1997). *The four agreements*. San Rafael, CA: Amber-Allen Publishing.

Be impeccable with your word. Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.

Rusk, Thomas. (1993). *The power of ethical persuasion*. New York: Penguin Books.

Any time you can demonstrate your willingness to listen to someone with a minimum of self-defensiveness or criticism, you are cultivating virtues within yourself that have a high payoff in self-respect. Any significant personal change requires exactly this kind of courage: the willingness to feel uncomfortable while acting 'as if' one is more mature and capable than one's familiar self. (p. 70)

Robinson, Dave & Garratt, Chris (2002). *Introducing ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Icon Books.

Language bewitchment can shape what we think is real. . . because there are convenient human terms like 'good' and 'bad' and 'human nature,' [we believe] that there are real physical, concrete entities to which these words refer. . . there are not. (p. 14)

Tolle, Eckart (2007). *A new earth: Awakening to your life's purpose*. New York: Penguin.

Words, no matter whether they are vocalized and made into sounds or remain unspoken as thoughts, can cast an almost hypnotic spell upon you. You easily lose yourself in them, become hypnotized into implicitly believing that when you have attached a word to something, you know what it is. The fact is: you don't know what it is. You have only covered up the mystery with a label. Everything, a bird, a tree, even a simple stone, and certainly a human being, is ultimately unknowable. This is because it has unfathomable depth. All we can perceive, experience, think about, is the surface layer of reality, less than the tip of an iceberg. (p. 23)

Ury, William (1993). *Getting past no: Negotiating your way from confrontation to cooperation*. New York: Bantam.

Additional quotes:

"If you want to govern people, you must place yourself below them" Lao-tzu

Microinequities [are the] subtle putdowns, snubs, dismissive gestures and sarcastic tones that douse our motivation, creativity, and sense of well-being. Mary Rowe, 1973

Notice that when we are really angry at someone, we tend to see them as having 100% negative qualities, and when we are attracted to someone, we see them as having 100% positive qualities. Neither view is accurate. Stephen Batchelor

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