

Roadblocks to the Effective Communication of Feelings

People need to be allowed/encouraged to express their own feelings without others directing, limiting, contributing to, evaluating, or channeling such emotive utterances. Others need to acknowledge hearing another's verbalizing; but their participation should end there.

1. **Directing, ordering, or commanding.** Ie: "you must...", "you have to...", or "you will..." provokes defensive or retaliatory communication.
2. **Warning, threatening, or admonishing.** Ie: "you had better..." or "if you don't, then..." produces resentment, anger, resistance, or rebellion.
3. **Moralizing, preaching, or obliging.** Ie: "you should...", "you ought...", "it's your duty to...", or "it is your responsibility to..." communicates a lack of trust and creates guilt.
4. **Persuading with logic, arguing, instructing, or lecturing.** Ie: do you realize..., "here is why you are/were wrong...", "that is not right...", "the facts are...", "yes, but..." makes a person feel wrong or stupid and elicits resistance.
5. **Advising, recommending, providing answers or solutions,** Ie: "what I would do is...", "why don't you...", "let me suggest...", "it would be best for you..." makes a person feel you don't understand.
6. **Evaluating, judging negatively, disapproving, blaming, name calling, or criticizing.** Ie: "you are lazy...", "you are not thinking straight...", or "you are acting foolishly..." Elicits feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, or incompetency; makes a person feel unworthy, bad, or unloved.
7. **raising, judging or evaluating positively, or approving.** Ie: "you're a good girl/boy...", "you've done a good job...", "that's a very good drawing...", "I approve of...", or "that was/is a nice thing to do..." stops communication; a condescending attitude creates feelings of being the "underdog."
8. **Supporting, reassuring, excusing, or sympathizing.** Ie: "it's not so bad...", "don't worry...", "you'll feel better...", or "that's too bad..." makes a person feel you do not want to understand.
9. **Diagnosing, analyzing, interpreting, reading-in, or offering insights.** Ie: "what you need is...", "what's wrong with you is...", "you're just trying to get attention...", "I know what you need...", "you don't really mean that...", or "your problem is..." questions a person's competency to figure out her/his own problems.
10. **Questioning, probing, cross examining, prying. Or interrogating.** Ie: "why...", "where...", "what...", "How...", or "when." makes a person feel defensive and causes resistance.
11. **Diverting, avoiding, by-passing, or shifting.** Ie: "let's not talk about it now," "not at the dinner table...", "forget it," "that reminds me...", or "we can discuss I later" makes a person feel you are not interested.
12. **Kidding, teasing, making light of, joking, or using sarcasm.** Ie: "why don't you burn the school down," "get up on the wrong side of the bed...", "when did they make you king?" makes a person feel you are not interested in her/him and communicates rejection or discounting.

