



THE ART OF LISTENING

“Everybody’s talking at me...I can’t hear a word they’re sayin’.” These lyrics represent probably the most problematic area of communication. Listening is an art-form which seems to have been lost in our society. A man who didn’t begin speaking until the age of five, when his mother was questioned by neighbors about his tardiness, indicated that he had a sister who began talking when she was 1 ½ years old but she hasn’t said anything yet.

Probably the best explanation of why people have difficulty listening is that “talking” is a way they can have some sense of control in their lives. The one missing element in many people’s lives is their not feeling a sense of control in their lives. They are more apt to be criticized than praised and the expectations that many have of themselves and others is that “perfection” must be attained in order to make it in our society. Happiness is “hard to come by” if we’re always “on guard”.

Effective listening entails our 1) clearing our minds; 2) waiting until the other person finishes expressing their thoughts/feelings; 3) not formulating our response or rebuttal while the other person is communicating but rather taking a few moments after they are through to determine what it is that we want to say. Although these may seem like hard steps to inaugurate, if practiced they can become second nature.

And furthermore, people will notice that we are interested in what they have to say and will want to communicate with us on a more qualitative level. I have found that for people who might be impulsive talkers, being with someone who is deliberately listening helps them to back off from their need to control.

A Brief Biographical Sketch

After an over 40 year career as a professional psychotherapist and Director of The Sports Stress Clinic in Amherst, NY, Charles Bonasera came to Florida and decided to use the benefits of his previous professional experiences in his new roles of Consultant in Life Management and Business Coaching as well as his expertise as a Motivational Speaker. He once again became involved with athletes in different sports training them with his techniques to help them develop and maintain focus as well as staying in their zone. Much of his training methods are derived from the CD collection he developed under the heading of WIN-WIN SECRETS as the President of Personal Identity Controls. This collection consists of thirty-six programs dealing with vital issues in the management of stress.

Another role that he adopted to add to his professional career was that of Author. Early in the 1980's he wrote Guide to a Life Management Process which he has re-written as a workbook to successfully help people manage their stress which includes his own Working Model. As a result in his interest in golf and realizing that it was essentially a "mind game", he wrote The Mental Side of Golf which can benefit the beginner as well as professionals playing the game of golf.

He then compiled over five-hundred sayings that he had developed in the course of his professional career as stimuli to help people change patterns in their lives entitled How to Stay Well and Live Life to the Fullest. This was followed by a book documenting case studies around disruptive life patterns including ways to change them under the name of How in the Hell Did This Happen to Me? Both his personal involvement in sports as a participant, coach, manager and in his role in officiating, inspired him to write a primer for parents and coaches entitled The Legend of Little League.

Charles invites you to view his website at www.charlesmbonasera.com as well as to write with your comments and questions to his e-mail address (charles@charlesmbonasera.com). He would also be very happy to communicate with his readers by telephone should they desire. His professional motto is "seeking alternative methods to happiness" and wishes those touched by his words to practice the three secrets to a happy life: "enjoy life and enjoy it thoroughly ... develop and maintain a sense of humor ... bring as much love into your life as possible.