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Rock the Boat!

Missed the class in February?
Catch it in March.

“Stop Arguments Before They Start”

Have you ever watched an argument spiral out of control? Did you wish you could rewind it and have it turn out differently? What if you could catch yourself before it happened? You can—If you understand your silent thoughts. Learn to “Stop Arguments Before They Start” by stopping them WHERE they start—in your mind.

Come to this seminar and maybe your next argument won't happen!

Kirkland Location Saturday, March 29 10:00 am-1:00 pm
To register, call Discover U at 206 365-0440 or visit: www.discoveru.org.

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Newsletter

Spring 2003

Staying Connected
Gold for Your Relationships

What's the fastest way to improve all of your relationships? Learn to listen. Really listen.

The value of listening is often overlooked. Why? Because it sounds so easy. How hard can it be? If I'm not talking, then I'm listening, right?

This is far from true. Listening is easy to describe but difficult to do. Listening takes deep concentration. It requires a commitment to staying with the other person no matter where her story takes you. It re-

quires staying open to her, no matter how her story makes you feel.

Imagine your close friend is telling you about a project that went awry at work. What does she need from you? She needs your complete attention. She needs you to understand and to let her know that you understand. That seems like a pretty short list of responsibilities. All right, now let's imagine that you're sitting across from her at the kitchen table, listening.

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Something New
Rock the Boat!

Sally knew that she and Mark had different tastes on their first date. But she kept her knowledge to herself.

When Mark said he liked to go camping, Sally didn't express her first thought, which was: "So do I, in a nice hotel." Instead, she said, "We used to go camping a lot when we were kids." When he said he

liked country music, she didn't say, "You've got to be kidding!" Instead, she said, "My boss is crazy about Garth Brooks."

It's not that she was trying to misrepresent who she was. It's just that when the relationship was new, she had a radar for similarities. That radar didn't pick up on differences so

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We all need a little time out to reflect...

“Nothing worse could happen to one than to be completely misunderstood.”

—Carl Jung

“You will see many thing, but they will mean nothing to you if you lose sight of the thing you love.”

—From the movie “First Sight”

“It doesn't matter who my father was; it matters who I remember he was.”

—Anne Sexton

“I don't like that man. I must get to know him better.”

—Abraham Lincoln

Rock the Boat!

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well. We all have that radar on first dates. We want to feel understood. We want to meet a kindred spirit. We don't want to rock the boat by finding differences.

Of course, by the time we decide to marry, we are past all that. We speak with perfect frankness about our tastes, our needs, our dreams. Right? Wrong. Even if we have achieved great honesty in our relationship, that radar for similarities can reappear right along with the engagement ring.

In a sense, being engaged is starting a new relationship. You were planning your weekends; now you're planning your future. You were deciding where to have dinner; now you're deciding where to live. You were splitting the check, now you're paying all the bills

together, starting with the wedding.

With more decisions to make, you will have more differences of opinion—that's just the way the math works. But you may find you're less willing to talk about them. You don't want to rock the boat.

I can't emphasize this strongly enough: Rock the boat! The time to face your differences is now. You might feel uncomfortable. But that's far better than the disappointment you could feel in the years to come if you start out with false expectations. A great way to start is with deeper listening, as described in "Gold for Your Relationships."

P.S. Any relationship, romantic or not, can benefit from clear expectations. Be brave. Rock the Boat!

Counseling with Claire Hatch, MSW

Counseling for Couples

I meet with both of you together and separately. I give you practical tools to make yourself understood, so you can get out of the "loop"—having the same argument over and over. I help you both be more of who you are. That's the key to a relationship that is alive and exciting.

The Honeymoon Toolkit

This is a 4-session package for pre-wedding and newlywed couples. I teach how-to's for a happy marriage, such as communication and "becoming We without losing Me." I also help you handle the complicated emotions of this amazing time of life.

For more information, visit www.clairehatch.com.
Questions? Contact me at 425 823-2273 or claire@clairehatch.com.

Gold for Your Relationships

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Soon a thought flits across your mind about something *you* forgot to do at work. "I need to take care of that as soon as I get in." Oops, you've missed a couple of sentences. Back to listening.

Next, you start to feel restless because all sorts of ideas pour into your mind. Your friend's story reminds you of something that happened to you not long ago. The outcome was hilarious and you know she'd appreciate the joke. But not now, because she's got her own problem to solve.

You just missed a crucial transition and now you're a little lost. Better concentrate a little harder. This takes effort! Your mind has a life of its own and it wants to go with the flow. It takes discipline to go with someone else's flow and do absolutely nothing else.

Now your friend talks about how her boss always leaves things to the last minute. You suddenly feel sensitive. That's a tendency of your own. You find yourself sympathizing with her boss. You wonder if your friend gets irritated with you in the same way she does with her boss. You start defending yourself in your mind—and miss

more of what your friend is saying.

Now your friend comes to the really painful part. How her boss blamed her for the problems in front of the whole team. It's hard to stay open to this, because you don't want her to be in pain. Your overly obliging mind starts generating quick and easy solutions, to get her out of her misery fast. You're tempted to tell her it's not so bad, that you know things will work out, that in the grand scheme of things it's not that important.

But you know what her reaction will be if you say any of those things. Frustration. Irritation. "You just don't understand!"

And understanding is what she needs most of all.

Strange, isn't it? You feel like you *do* understand. That's why you want to take away her distress. But all the brilliant solutions in the world will not make her feel like you understand.

The only thing that will do that is listening. Not jumping in with your own stories, not worrying about your own problems, and not offering solutions. Listening and absolutely nothing else.

Listening. Easy to describe. Hard to do. Pure gold for your relationships.

Ever Wondered How Can Counseling Help Your Relationship?

"It gave us many insights and tools to make our communication stronger."

—Mary

"Exposing each other to these issues now provides a strong foundation for the marriage."

—Michelle

"It opened my eyes to the other point of view."

—Gary

"I realized that HOW I say something is just as important as WHAT I say. It makes a big difference to how my wife and I get along."

—Tim

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