

Talking Points

How You Say it Changes Everything (Part 1) ---- by Gary Dahl

How to talk and write so that your wife can hear and understand.

*“Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
and those who love it will eat its fruits.”* Proverbs 18:21 ESV

In seasons of marital struggle, and when things are tense, some guys open their mouths or write her an email or text and word it in such a way that they make things worse. They don't realize that language within relationships and especially intimate relationships sometimes requires us to say or word things differently than we otherwise might. Speaking and writing in a loving productive way starts with having our heart right.

Our words are reflections of our mind and heart. If we don't get our motivations, maturity and heart right, we may not be understood and worse, we can really blow it.

Do any of these guys sound like you?

- They don't know how to ask for what they want in a way she can understand.
- They are frustrated because they don't understand her, but don't know how to ask for clarification in a way that she can understand.
- They send her emails that push her into a corner and force an angry response.
- They don't know how to say “No” without making her mad.
- Conversations about important issues almost always go sideways.
- They can't draw a boundary or protect themselves without sounding like a bully.
- They don't know what to say to influence her lovingly without “fixing” or controlling.
- They don't know how to get their point across without coming off like she is wrong or bad.

How did we get here?

*“A fool takes no pleasure in understanding,
but only in expressing his opinion.”* Proverbs 18:2 ESV

The 5 Top Reasons We Fail in our Communications:

Self-centeredness. You write a letter to her that is all about you and may not even reference her side at all. Yours is the only valid interpretation of events. It's all about you and your feelings. It's about “all the bad things you did to me”. Me, me, me.

Insecurity – We can't acknowledge that she might be right in some things, and that we were wrong. An insecure man can't allow himself to be seen as being wrong. He accuses instead of inquires. He puts words in her mouth. He interprets events to his own advantage. He must be the winner.

Immaturity This guy writes a letter, email, or text that is blaming, belittling, attacking or has name calling. He cannot have any flaws or issues. He whines and plays the victim. His emotions get the best of him; he writes when he is angry. He writes before thinking things through or getting advice.

Ego. This is when he's got to be right and she's wrong. This guy can't consider that his wife might be right. There's going to be a winner and a loser. He's superior - but in his heart, he's insecure.

Ignorance – Applies to most of us. We simply don't know how to say things in a way she'll understand.