

Talking Points

Soften Her Heart by Softening Your Language

(Part 3) ---- By Gary Dahl

Direct, honest speech is a wonderful thing. You know where you stand with the direct speaker. If there's a problem, it's out in the open. The direct speaker is not hiding how they feel and what they want. When both parties are direct and non-reactive, they have an excellent opportunity to solve problems. However, since we are fallen humans, direct, honest speech is frequently the exception not the rule, especially in challenged relationships where the stakes are high.

Anger and emotions are part of life and should be expected, but if they are allowed to escalate the dialog to the point of a blow-up, the connection becomes painful, and the relationship deteriorates. Fortunately, God's word is full of guidance for this situation. Consider Proverbs 15:1.

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Proverbs 15:1

And this:

*"Pleasant words are a honeycomb,
Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."* Proverbs 16:24

And also from Proverbs:

*"The words of the reckless pierce like swords,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing."* Proverbs 12:18

Bottom line, how we speak and the words we use can make the difference between healing and angry disconnection. If we think a conversation may deteriorate into an unproductive argument, it may be time to soften our language.

Softening the language may enable you to:

- Get your point across without provoking her.
- Talk about topics that otherwise might be too provocative
- Force us to think less about "winning" and more about how the other feels
- Minimize any threat or anxiety either of you might feel, making the conversation safer
- Help you remove controlling aspects of your language.
- Give both of you the opportunity to see each other's side more clearly.

"Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building up the one in need and bringing grace to those who listen." Ephesians 4:29

The most effective way to learn softening language in actual use may be in examples. That's why we have developed...

The Official MMG Guide to Uncommon Phrases for Better Communications

This is a comprehensive list, so we have included examples of more direct phrases for problem solving, which will follow in part 4.