

Is that the reason why I cannot communicate well?



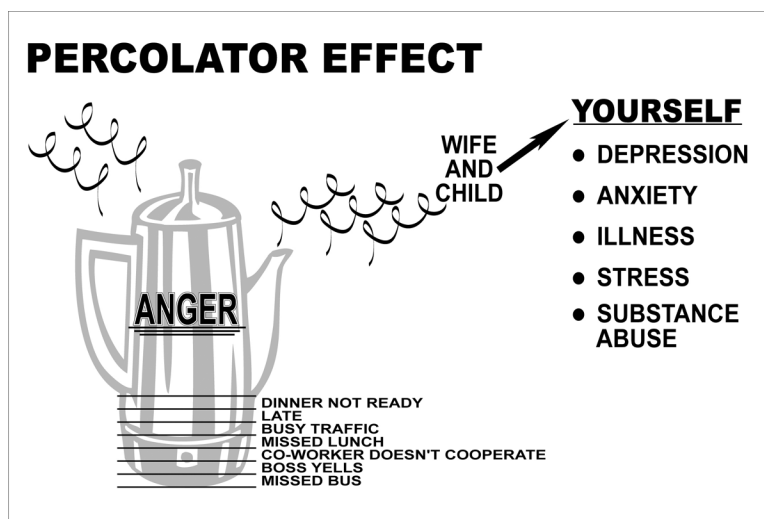
Learn how to avoid conflict, communication tips, and how to become assertive.

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Is that the reason why I cannot communicate well?

Communication is an art form. It is something that in this culture, people get very little practice at. In fact, actually, feelings are not even recognized as something good or natural. Oftentimes, in Western culture, people are told that not feeling is the best thing, which is really too bad because a complete human being has a number of different inputs in which to ascertain reality. There's an intellectual input, which consists of thinking and taking in what the world is saying, and coming up with concepts about what is happening. But there are also feelings, which give incredible information, and actually, energy. So emotions are about energy.

What I want to focus on is how to be assertive and communicate and deal with conflict resolution in an appropriate way, and that is often only possible by establishing good boundaries. Assertiveness is about people standing up for themselves and communicating without putting somebody else down. Again, what I want to focus on is the whole idea of emotions at this point in time. The body is in homeostasis or balance, and that's where people like to operate from as human beings. There is an interflow that happens, so when people breathe in, they go out of balance. When they breathe out, they re-establish balance again. And emotions operate in the same way. One feels an emotion and if it's not expressed, the person will not return back to homeostasis. The energy from the feeling has to go somewhere and it often gets funneled into a somatic symptom such as a stomach ache or builds up in the system in some other way.



Percolator Effect.

A common example of this phenomenon is called the percolator effect. For those who are under 30 and don't know what a percolator is, it's an old style coffee pot that you put on a stove or in an electrical socket, and the pressure builds and the water circulates and it brews the coffee. The example I'm going to relate is a very traditional '50s sort of example and unfortunately still common today. Imagine the following scenario; a guy who goes off to work, and he misses the bus. He is angry about that, therefore the energy has taken him out of balance, but he doesn't really know what to do about that. Now, if he believes that he needs to be perfect and in control, which a lot of people in this society believe, his tendency will be to take that energy, push it down and try to just "handle it".

Essentially, that energy and feeling get dissociated. The person really thinks they have taken care of the emotion, but it is still within his body and therefore, it is still affecting him. He could blame somebody else, even though there's nobody around at that time and even if he could displace the emotion it would not really dissipate. He goes to work late, and the boss yells at him, but our fellow doesn't realize it's not a black/white situation. In other words, he could turn around, at most places, and tell the boss that he didn't like the way he was treated because of the boss's tone of voice, but that he was sorry that he was late and there was no excuse for that. What our guy does is just stuffs the feeling one more time. Now instead of one bit of energy, he's got two bits of energy that are stuck in his body, doing some damage, and wanting some kind of discharge.

Later on in the day, a co-worker doesn't do what he wants, so underneath his breath he curses at her, just enough for the woman to hear, but not enough for her to hear distinctly. But in that manner, he thinks he's gotten out some of the anger. However, unless it's done in an assertive way, clean from mind altering chemicals, one-to-one, and directly, no energy really gets out, it just leaks out the side in a passive-aggressive way. Now he misses lunch, traffic is busy, he's late getting home, and at each stage, he's pushing that emotion down. He gets home, he says, "Honey, where's dinner?" She says, "It'll be about fifteen minutes," and he blows up and yells and screams, taking the opportunity to get all this out on his wife and his kids. This is a very traditional thing that tends to happen in this society, unfortunately. It is called inappropriate expression of anger, or displaced aggression. "I'm really angry at this person, but I take it out over here because somehow I can't hold on to it anymore," or "I think it's safer to show it with family." It is