

The 5 Levels of Communication

July 13, 2020

Dr. D. Joseph & Colette Joseph
Associate Pastor, Pleasant Grove Church
Cary, NC

The 5 Levels of Communication in Relating to God

- ▶ **5: The World of Cliches Level-** 1 Kings 19:10; Matthew 5:27-28
- ▶ **4: The News Reporter Level-** Exodus 3:11, 13; John 1:29
- ▶ **3: Testing The Water Level -** Judges 6:17, 36-38; Matthew 14:28-29
- ▶ **2: Making Your Heart Known Level-** Psalm 42:1-2; Psalm 143:6; Philipians 4:6
- ▶ **1: Complete Vulnerability-** Psalm 119:20; Acts 17:28

Levels 4 & 5 Communication

▶ 5: The World of Cliches Level

This is the lowest level. There is no depth at this level, but it has a place. Couples don't really share anything at this level. The conversations are shallow and impersonal. Things like "How are you?" "The weather is great today."

▶ 4: The News Reporter Level

You share what you know about something – your day, what happened with the kids, etc. Your conversation is similar to the nightly news, primarily reporting the facts. Your conversation has gone just beyond common, which gives you things to talk about, but you can't stay here. An example is sharing how your work day went, how the kids did, what's for dinner, or what somebody shared on Facebook. This is where we spent a lot of our time in communication. We'd go beyond common communication, but not by much.

Levels 2 & 3 Communication

▶ 3: Testing The Water Level

Couples cautiously share their opinions, ideas, and judgments. You reveal some, but not all of you. As you share, you carefully watch your spouse, and if you sense any bit of question or rejection, you abandon the conversation and close up eliminating your chance to get below the surface. You may bring up the fact that you'd like to spend more time golfing or fishing with the fellas, or you want to spend the next holiday with your family, or how the big vacation you've discussed may not be the best thing right now. This is where we got stuck and just couldn't seem to get past it. We weren't willing to risk anything, due to past repercussions, or we just wanted to stay in our comfort zones.

▶ 2: Making Your Heart Known Level

Now you've done it. Feelings can be hurt when you expose yourselves to this depth. But you must do this. If not, your marriage won't grow. This is where you share things about yourself, your spouse, your marriage, or your life that your wife may not agree with, or that may lead to hurt. This could range from wanting to discipline your kids in a different way to how the lack of a budget for your money is leading the family into a financial hole.

Level 1 Communication

▶ 1: Complete Vulnerability

This is where you are completely open and honest with each other – total transparency. Sharing the real you. It means truthfully sharing your heart – your doubts, your fears, your insecurities, your struggles. It means loving sharing your feelings about each other - your frustrations, concerns, and hurts. You are now able to share anything and everything with each other. If either spouse developed some unhealthy habits, you are able to honestly share those with one another without condemnation. If you are concerned with the way work, or your marriage is going, you can talk to each other about it. You trust and she trusts that you have each other's best interests at heart and you're committed to talking through anything that comes up. For help to start these deep talks,

Key Questions For Discussion

1. Describe a time when your communication was not as good as it is today. How did you improve?
2. What level are you communicating at now with your spouse?
3. What do you do when your spouse does not respond as you expected when you try to 'open your heart' (level 2)?
4. Have you made it to Level One communication in your marriage? If not, how can you work towards it?
5. What do you or your spouse have to do to get to Level One?

REMEMBER-

- ▶ With each conversation, be attentive to what level you are communicating. Then consciously go a level deeper. Much like lifting weights, you start with light weights, then you increase, and eventually you've built the strength to lift heavy weights or, in this case, have level one communication in your marriage.