

The power of words essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Do you remember the saying as a child, “ Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me? ” The second part of this phrase was and still is commonly overlooked, but many can oppose this statement according to personal experiences. Not only have people’s feelings been hurt by words, but many lives have been lost as well. The power of words is extremely powerful and can affect one emotionally, physically, and mentally. A certain phrase, phrases, or choice of words used can appeal to emotion.

Author Jodi Picoult says, “ Words are like eggs dropped from great heights; you can no more call them back than ignore the mess they leave when they fall. ” (Picoult, nd) Jodi uses a simile to compare the mess that eggs can leave to the mess one’s words can leave behind. When someone says something disrespectful to another, it could be taken offensively. Some wish to take back things that were said after realizing it caused pain, hurt, and/or humiliation. However, if a compliment were given instead, this would arouse happiness, joy, self-confidence, pleasure, pride, etc.

According to Angela Johnson, “ When you hear a powerful positive statement it can change your whole mood. Positive words can change how you think about certain things even if you had a negative view of it before. ” (Johnson, 2012) Even after having a rough day, being able to hear such positive toned words could brighten anyone’s day. Words that appeal to happiness tend to give positive insights about a particular subject, person, or object. Whether appeal to emotion is intended to hurt or brighten, the right choice of words can accomplish the goal.

In addition to emotional health, words can also take a positive or negative physical toll. Barbara White suggests, “ Words give out energy and a message which creates a reaction in others. ” (White, nd) Impressions are based upon one’s actions, words, and behavior. If friendly kind traits are displayed when meeting another, a good impression is left in that person’s mind. Not only do good things stick in an individual’s mind, but words that may intimidate or ruin self-image. Actions are commonly based on how others treat you.

Bullying, for example, is another contribution to many people having low self-esteem or a lack of self-confidence. In the article, “ Bullying and Depression,” researchers state that the connection between bullying and depression “ can be long-lasting; people who are bullied as children are more likely to suffer from depression as an adult than children not involved in bullying. ” (www. bullyingstatistics. org, nd) Verbal abuse is a main type of bullying, and many individuals per day are faced with this challenge.

The bully may not think that the words said were that big of a deal, but the chances are high that the person targeted goes home every night and cries or goes into a depressed state. Not only can words affect one physically, but negative words can also lead to mental problems. The tone of a statement, whether negative or positive, can lead to a mental change in how an individual thinks or responds to a certain situation. “ Criticism, or the generation of ‘ evaluative judgements,’ is often ‘ painful’ or ‘ difficult’ to receive,” states Gregg Walker. Walker, nd) Criticism is huge in today’s world and it can either improve an individual or break them.

Some people take criticized comments to a personal level and feel a lack of effort or confidence. Not only does it lower self-esteem, but it can also convince somebody that their actions are no longer good enough. On the other hand, positive criticism can lead to improvement in attitude or work agility. Mr. Walker also states, “ If handled appropriately by both the person criticized and the person being criticized, critical feedback can promote constructive growth in individuals and relationships. (Walker, nd)

The impact of negative criticism highly differs from the outcome of positive criticism. For example, a citizen may tell an officer that they appreciate all the time and effort it goes into being in law enforcement. That officer is going to feel good about himself and will continue to work hard due to the positive feedback. Not all comments of criticism are intended to ruin someone’s reputation, but some are said in hopes of pushing another to work harder and efficiently.

Things said cannot be taken back, and they can either make or break individuals. Words work just like criticism; they can either hurt or improve somebody. Due to the fact that words appeal to emotion, the affect it can have on somebody can be strong. Words create change whether it is realized or not. The next time “ sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me” is heard, think about the many ways words truly can hurt. Individuals are impacted emotionally, physically, and mentally by the extreme power of words.