

Essay on a family is more than the sum of its parts

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Communication Reflection

It was after my evening class and rushed to the grocery to make some purchases for my use. The queue was getting longer and longer and so, I hurriedly queued. Once on the queue, another guy came running and stood beside me and looked right into my eyes. Astonished at him, I said hi to him but he could not answer as all his minds were fixed on me. I was compelled to look aside and see whether he would change. On facing him again, his eyes were still glued on me. " Why did you abandon our car?" said the guy in a distressed voice. Which car and when? I asked. " We left you in our after you agreed to replace the alternate for my dad's discovery land rover." Are you sure with the person you are talking to? I asked and the guy insisted that I am the one. I looked at him again and asked whether he is convinced that I am the one. " Yes you are I know you." I did not believe my eyes since I had no idea of the guy. I talked to me in a language I did not understand then I told him to speak English. He paused and asked you mean " you are not an Italian?" I said I am not. He asked whether I have a cell phone so that he confirms by calling my number. On calling someone else answered. He kept quiet and said that I exactly resemble the mechanic and he thought I was the one.

According to Adler et al. listening is the active process of receiving and responding to the spoken message and sometime unspoken. The three scholars suggest that to hear, understand, consider and feedback are the components of listening in general. I heard what the stranger was passing to me because I focused my senses on him. It assured him that I was listening and it was possible for him to carry on. Although initially it was difficult even

for him to get my attention since we were strangers to each other. To some extent it hindered my effective listening as I initially looked aside when he majestically walked to me and looked direct into my eyes (p. 30-56).

It was a bit difficult to comprehend what the strange guy was trying to pass across but I did understand it. I have realized from the interaction that to understand what the speaker says has nothing to do with the agreement or evaluation as evaluation comes later on. Once a person understands a message, he or she communicates back to the satisfaction of the message sender or source. It can be seen above when the guy asked why I abandoned the car, I asked which car and when- indicating that I understood what he asked. Consideration is yet another element of listening. As a listener, I had to evaluate my thoughts and feelings from his utterances. In considering, a person evaluates whether the information made by the message source makes a difference in the listeners, feelings, thoughts and what actions to take.

The feedback was a revelation of my consideration and appreciation of his input. Feedback can be immediately or later. It is evident when I looked aside when the guy hurriedly came where I was and glued his eyes at me. The response shows that I had incorporated my initial feedback into my consideration of his message. I did fit in Adler et al definition of listening in that I did respond to him even before he had uttered a word. It explains why listening is referred to as a skill and that the very simple act of keeping silent communicates (Socha & Rhunette, p. 112-200).

Communication barriers such language barrier hinders effective listening in that one fails completely to understand the message. When the source of a

message conveys the message in a language unfamiliar to the receiver, then listening is completely blocked. If one cannot decode a message no communication takes place because there would be no understanding, consideration and feedback. Use of jargon and technical language in a setting where the audience is not part of it would impede listening.

Interpersonal barriers such as low self esteem and series of deep-rooted prejudice hinder listening. Interpersonal barriers prevent people from reaching each other and opening up. It is important to note that communication is never a one way process and therefore closure of a person that may be caused by various reasons hinders active listening (Vangelisti, 258).

Cultural clashes hinder listening. In some cultures around the world, men do not listen to women addressing them. It is infact the other way round whereby the women are required to listen from men. Therefore, if a woman is sent to give very useful information to such a group of people it is common knowledge that communication will not take place. Perception barriers prevent effective listening. Perception barriers are internal. If a person goes to a meeting and he or she is expected to deliver a message and he feels within himself that the recipient will not be interested in the information may end up sabotaging the person subconsciously and he may even decide not to give the message. Emotional barriers impede listening. Emotions carry away one's thoughts and he cannot listen carefully. Other barriers are physical for example distance.

In reference to above; a favorite Mexican soap opera, Paloma is in love with Rodriguez. Rodriguez is an eloquent gentleman, who is unable to decide

between Paloma, Rita and Audrey. He loves all of them. Paloma is very close to Rodriguez and is assured that she will marry him. Later, in the course of their courtship, Paloma realizes that Rodriguez is in love with other women. She cries the whole night, fails to eat and in the morning goes to Rodriguez apartment with anger. She leaves their home without notice to anyone against their homes regulations. Rodriguez explains to her that he is not in love only that they are good friend. She takes time to agree but finally agrees because she loves him. To this end, therefore, one can conclude that females are more emotional than male. Paloma trusts Rodriguez and that is why she accepts his idea even when she thinks otherwise of him.

ICT has drastically changed the way most things are done in the today's society. Technological advancement in the area of ICT enables people to express their feelings. A person can use ICT to form an expression on his facebook profile to represent a situation that does not exist. For example, a person has a facebook account showing a very gorgeous woman but in reality the person is even not a woman. Such a profile makes men to make attempts of connecting with the person with the aim of winning the lady. It is the work of the ICT in creating such images. Information communication technology has thus facilitated encoding and decoding of emotional expressions. A person can comfortably talk with friends relatives and close associates via facebook and express their feelings in writing. Skype has even made it easier for a person to express their emotions to their partners through direct video links. A soldier on duty in a very faraway place from his family can express their emotional feelings to their families at home.

The statement is derived from the famous writer known as Aristotle. In other words, a family being more than the sum of its parts, it could mean that the various elements that constitute a family produce a total effect that is much greater than what the individual contributions. A good example to explain the statement is that the human body is more than the sum of the various organs that make it. It implies that the family is a big unit in resolving problems facing its members. It is also a statement to encourage unity and corporation. Different element of a family for instance, children parents and relatives make a healthy family. A voice can be heard through a united group than an individual. A united family can achieve more if it works together than if an individual pursues his or he own way(family communications article).

My family is very united and works together as a unit. It is evident when an emergency occurs. Everyone pool together to solve the issue at hand, the problem is that almost everyone is an expert his or own way and this hinders effective communication. There is no structured way of communicating because most of the family members leave in different parts of the world and as a result have been socialized differently. The different exposures family members have gives members freedom to be independent thinkers.

Therefore, in times of distress the family is the institution for alleviating distress and anxiety. But at the end, it's still a one family. To this end, the conformity of family is based on effective communication within its members.

A good friend of mine got an opportunity to travel to Kigali Rwanda for abroad duties. I had not met him for two years and thus did not know that within that period he got married. With our usual jokes I wrote on her

timeline that he should bring with him a beautiful lady who would later be his wife because the ladies there are very cute and hospitable. The guy got furious because he thought that his wife would associate him with womanizers. The conflict here is that the guy wanted to present a picture of being a very nice guy and I did not understand his personality and also that he had married. In fact I wasn't serious but was interested in drawing his attention we chat. Finally a friend we work with send me an email that we are to meet and discuss an issue before we go to the field work. The email stated that we should meet at 03. 00 on 4th June, 2014. I thought that he had made a mistake of the date because 0300 is on 5th June, 2014. I came to learn later when he was distressed at 330 pm that I had not availed myself. The conflict is that he made a mistake on the date and while I thought otherwise, I never consulted him. The interpersonal conflict is thus as a result of distorted information hindering communication of the intended message.

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