

# Interpersonal communications: concept analysis paper

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



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PaperCommunicationtakes place in any and all locations, intentionally and unintentionally, and it can be positive or negative. Many of our personal traits and character qualities can affect how we communicate with other people, and how they communicate with us. Recently, I had an experience that further proved this point to me in a very real and tangible way. Growing up, I have been known as levelheaded and optimistic. I don't let a lot of distractions or emotions change or affect the way I act around others.

As an athlete, my coaches always knew that if they called me into a game I would handle the pressure and play to the best of my ability, so I decided to change that about myself for a day. The night before my " experiment", I somehow ended up in a fight with my parents, (not purposefully, of course) which really set the stage. The next morning I woke up with a negative outlook on the day, the thoughts of our fight playing over in my head. I went to school, and no one talked to me, which hasn't happened since my first day of classes, and even then I felt like people were more convivial with me.

I think that because I woke up thinking that it was going to be an awful day, I made choices and acted in ways that made that idea come to fruition. This is called " self-fulfilling prophecy". According to Alder, Rosenfeld & Proctor (2013), " A self-fulfilling prophecy occurs when a person's expectations of an event, and her or his subsequent behavior based on those expectations, make the outcome more likely to occur than would otherwise have been true. (p. 74)" At school, because of my sour disposition and gloomy temperament, I was ignored.

Not one person talked to me throughout my three classes that day. It was really quite discouraging. I believe this is because in our culture, we learn (or at least I did) that someone who doesn't look like they want to be talked to, doesn't want to be talked to. Throughout the day I found myself looking around at the pretty, smiling girls and feeling very inadequate. I realize now, what I was feeling was a result of social comparison. According to Alder, Rosenfeld & Proctor (2013), social comparison is "...evaluating ourselves in terms of how we compare with others.

We decide whether we are superior or inferior and similar or different by comparing ourselves to what social scientists call reference groups... " (p. 69). Social comparison, in this instance, brought upon feelings of inferiority, as I was displaying undesirable qualities. After a very disheartening day at class, I went home. By the time my mom came home, my attitude had worsened. First she asked me " What happened? ". I responded by saying, " Nothing, I'm fine. " Which she took literally, by the content of my words, when I was hoping that she would take them in a relational sense and see that I wasn't really " fine".

In this instance, my mother was hearing my words in a contextual form, so when I said, " I'm fine. ", she heard me saying that I was okay and nothing was wrong. If she had realized that I was communicating with her relationally, she could have been able to tell by the tone of my voice and my non-verbal communications that I was not really " fine". At the end of this very long day, I saw my boyfriend. While I am more open with him than I am

with other people, I know that he still sees me as a smiling, level-headed person.

Somehow he immediately knew that something was wrong. I decided to self-disclose to him, and tell him what was wrong. I told him about the fight between my parents and I, and I believe that my self-disclosure in this instance was more beneficial than risky. He also encouraged me to change my attitude and be more positive, and I believe his words had a more profound effect on me because he is literally a “ significant other”. In every relationship, we can choose what to reveal about ourselves to other people.

This is called “ self-disclosure” and it is described as “ The process of deliberately revealing information about oneself that is significant and that would normally not be known by others. (p. G-11)” In this instance, my boyfriend would not have known why I was upset, he would only have known that I was upset. When self-disclosing, honesty is of the utmost importance. If you aren't honest in your communication, then you aren't truly communicating. I learned a lot about communication, and I realized that I actually changed my self-concept unintentionally for 24 hours.

On that day, I walked around campus feeling as if not one person wanted to converse with me, which was incredibly hard. I also learned that you could never be sure why some people are unfriendly; they may just be having a bad day. I believe that on that day I relinquished some of the power of my identity management. Never before had I let myself be seen as shy or unfriendly, my presenting self was always approachable and helpful. The presenting self is “...the way we want to appear to others. In most cases the

presenting self we seek to create is a socially approved image: diligent student, loyal friend, loving partner, and so on. p. 78)". I believe that it was a good experience; I let go of my presenting or public self and was able to see more clearly how it changed my communication methods and the way others communicated with me. I also believe that it left me with the knowledge of how to better communicate with people that appear unfriendly or closed off, because you never know, they may just be having "one of those days".

References Adler, R. B. , Rosenfeld, L. B. , & Proctor, R. F. (2004). *Interplay: The process of interpersonal communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.