A gift for you from Relationship Coaching Institute

THE COMMUNICATION MAP:
A One Page Communication System for All Relationships
by David Steele, MA, LMFT, CLC
Introduction to *The Communication Map*

As a couples therapist, one of my first and highest priorities in helping couples with serious relationship challenges often was effective communication.

Conflict and its painful consequences was often the presenting problem, and I learned early in my training that attempting to simply mediate their disagreements or solve their problems was futile and ineffective.

For years I tried different models for teaching and facilitating effective communication. Most were too complicated for the couple to implement at home, and all were too limited in their application. Some required weeks, even months of classes and workshops that I knew my couples wouldn't attend, as they needed something NOW. I wanted a communication tool that was so easy to learn and practical that I could teach it to them in one session and the couple could immediately implement it at home, and addressed some areas that I believed were critical to good relationships.

Too much to ask for? I thought so. I gave up my search for outside solutions and just started doing my own thing with my couples. After a few years of trying different ideas, taping myself working with couples, and refining a complicated mess into a concise package of tools and concepts, the “Communication Map” was born.

The Communication Map is a foundational tool for addressing problems in a relationship. By “foundational” I mean it will help the couple communicate and resolve issues effectively, so that other relationship building tools and skills can be learned and practiced. It is a good place to start with couples in conflict.

There are two primary areas addressed by The Communication Map:

1) **Relationship Attitudes**

“Attitudes” are beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, that highly influence behavior. “Attitude precedes outcome.” Unproductive relationship attitudes must be addressed and changed. There are some (I believe) critical relationship attitudes necessary to a successful relationship that must be learned and adopted.

2) **Relationship Skills**

We are not born with the skills needed to have a successful relationship, and if we don’t learn them in our family growing up, we must learn them as adults. No-one can be successful at a task without the necessary skills.
QUESTION #1: How do you, as a Relationship Professional, address your clients’ relationship skills deficits and unproductive attitudes?

ANSWER: Teach them The Communication Map

It’s a place to start, anyway. All you know about this couple is what they tell you and what you observe. You can’t accurately know their relationship attitudes and skills and what --really-- goes on when they are alone, so you need a foundation to build upon with them. The first priority is FUNCTIONING, then you can get to the good stuff.

QUESTION #2: How can you learn The Communication Map?

ANSWER: By printing this out and listening to a 40 minute audio program using the link below

I’m very pleased to share this relationship tool with you as my gift and sincerely hope it makes a difference for you and your clients.

This is a small example of the tools we teach for coaching singles and couples at Relationship Coaching Institute.

INVITATIONS:

1) If you like The Communication Map, please share it with your colleagues.

2) If you are interested in Relationship Coaching Institute programs for relationship coaching training, certification, marketing and practice building support, please visit http://www.RelationshipCoachingInstitute.com or call us toll free at 888-268-4074

3) If you received this from a colleague and wish to subscribe to our free monthly Relationship Coaching News e-zine for cutting-edge relationship coaching information, please visit http://www.relationshipcoachinginstitute.com/forms/subscribe.htm

4) I invite you to join our free Introduction to Relationship Coaching teleclass series. Class #1 covers “How to Coach Singles,” Class #2 “How to Coach Couples,” and Class #3 “How to Build a Successful Practice.” http://www.relationshipcoachinginstitute.com/forms/freeteleclass.htm

5) Check out our Free Monthly Practice Building Tele-Seminar Series, free How to Get Clients e-book and audio program and other practice building information at http://www.BuildingYourIdealPractice.com

David Steele, MA, is a California-based Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Relationship Coach, founder of Relationship Coaching Institute and BuildingYourIdealPractice.com, author of How to Build Your Ideal Practice in 90 Days, the How to Get Clients Toolkit, and soon-published Conscious Dating: Finding the Love of Your Life in Today’s World. He can be contacted by e-mailing david@relationshipcoachinginstitute.com
Communication Map

Receiver

↓

1. **Experience Issue**
   (It’s all about you!)

↓

2. **Hit Wall**
   (or not!)

↓

3. **Identify Issue**
   (Talkers vs. Thinkers)

↓

4. **Communicate Issue**
   (Get/Give validation/confirmation)

↓

“**Do you have a request?**”
“**What you need from me is...?**”

↓

Never say “**No**”
(counter-propose)

↓

5. **Make Request**
   (Let go of how/outcome)

↓

6. **Negotiate**

↓

7. **Agree**

↓

8. **Follow Through**

Sender

↓

1. **Experience Issue**
   (It’s all about you!)

↓

2. **Hit Wall**
   (or not!)

↓

3. **Identify Issue**
   (Talkers vs. Thinkers)

↓

4. **Communicate Issue**
   (Get/Give validation/confirmation)

↓

“**Help me to understand... What is Your Issue?**”

↓

The Wall!

1. Judgment
2. Interpretation
3. Defensiveness
4. Reactive
   Emotion

Laws / Guidelines

1. Issues are unmet needs
2. All issues are valid
3. Who has the unmet need owns the issue
4. One issue at a time
5. Take turns being sender – one person speaks at a time
6. Speak w/ moderation
7. Listen w/ curiosity
8. Assume win/win
9. Nurture the space between

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http://www.relationshipcoachingnetwork.org
To listen to 40 minute Communication Map training:

Telephone recording: call 918-222-7201 ext. 344
or-

Use this link for internet audio-
http://www.relationshipcoachinginstitute.com/audio/communication_map.html

Bonus! Top 5 Communication Tips For Couples
By David Steele

1. Use The 3 Magic Words of Listening- “Is there more?”
   For most people, listening is far more challenging than talking. If you do nothing else, being attentive to what your partner is saying and using these 3 magic words will make you a star listener. Try it!

   Are you wondering what the “3 Magic Words Of Speaking” are? Simply … “I love you”. If you are expressing things that may be difficult for your partner to hear, be sure to start and end with these healing words.

2. It’s not about you!
   When your partner is expressing a thought, feeling, need, issue, or judgment, it comes from their reality, is valid for them, and it is not about you! Most arguments would never happen if we would simply accept our partner’s point of view and agree to disagree.

3. It’s all about you!
   Your thoughts, feelings, needs, issues, and judgments are your reality, are valid for you, have little to do with your partner, and many people (including your partner) are unlikely to see things your way. If you take full ownership for your experience you will be able to create the conditions for connection and harmony in just about any situation with your partner. A fulfilling relationship is about having, accepting, and negotiating differences, not being “right”, seeking sameness or consensus.

4. Turn complaints into requests
   We bring many, many needs into any relationship and will experience an issue when a need is not met. It is impossible for all needs to be met all the time in any relationship, so you will have many opportunities to experience and express issues. Simply making a request and focusing on what you want to happen, instead of what is wrong or not happening, and negotiating a “win-win” outcome, will effectively prevent or resolve conflict.

5. Tell your truth
   The path to true intimacy and connection is by being authentic and telling your full truth to your partner about your thoughts, feelings, needs, wants, issues, boundaries, etc. Intimacy means, “Into me I see”, a transparency between two people that requires full expression of what is inside. Seeking to avoid conflict and maintain harmony by censoring yourself can work for awhile, until your suppressed truth comes out in other ways, such as withdrawal, resentment, “acting out”, etc. Telling your whole truth can be scary, but will result in the kind of relationship that you really want.
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