

CREATING OPENNESS IN THE DANCE OF COMMUNICATION

BY MARTINA HUGHES

Do you remember the last time you walked away from a difficult conversation with your lover feeling complete, nourished and fulfilled? If you are saying yes, congratulations for bringing yourself fully to the task of clear communication within an intimate relationship.

The intimate relationship is fertile ground for many communication challenges. It is easy in the beginning - you enjoy witty conversation, silent glances full of anticipation, and the friction of arms touching as you walk through a doorway. It all feels good! The ego dances - this person likes me, it is flattering, they want to spend time with me, and it feels good.

And then, what happens when this wonderful person says something or does something that you disagree with or do not like. It is part two of the ego's dance - the low, they don't love me, they don't respect me, they don't want me. What to do?

The challenge to the ego is to stay open - can you walk through the difficulty with another, can you express your feelings without expectation or attachment to the other being a particular way? Real communication and true intimacy is the result of being able to stay in the dance with each other, through the highs and the lows.

John who has been married for 20 years had been holding onto resentment about lack of sexual compatibility from the early years of his mar-

riage. The build up of resentment and all the unspoken communication between them created a huge barrier such that everyday conversation was loaded with tension and unexpressed feelings, and as a result all sexual activity had ceased. Recently, he talked with his wife regarding what he had been feeling. In his words, "I feel better, she has noticed that I am a different person. I feel desire for her, for the first time in a long time."

What did John do that made a difference?

- he spoke to an independent person which supported him to dispel the emotional charge so that he could approach without blame, shame or judgement

- he gave himself permission to be true and authentic

- he shared his feelings and experience without any fixed idea of response from his partner

- he created two way communication - leaving space for his partner to express her feelings

- he was ready for a new experience

To optimise your experience of communication, create two way channels. Often, people express what they need to say without ever asking "was it received by the other person?" or "did the other person feel seen, received or heard?" The way in which we communicate has an effect on the other person. When you speak, do you stay connected to

yourself? Do you allow your feelings to be present in the conversation? Do you retreat into your head in order to stay "safe"?

Are you looking to hook the other person and make them responsible for what you feel and experience?

Often, people attempt to have the other person change so that they don't have to face their own discomfort. Sally would say regularly to her lover "you need to share your feelings, so I feel connected to you." The transformation came for Sally when she started to share her feelings because then her lover could respond to her and that created the connection. While she was stuck in the habit of telling him what to do, she was avoiding her own discomfort by blaming him and not connecting with her own feeling nature.

Within the self development paradigm, people can get stuck in trying to work out "what is mine?" or "what is theirs?", which can result in nothing being said and tension, irritation or resentment accumulating.

Often people try to work out in their minds the correct thing to say, usually so they can get the outcome they want. Instead of this, taking a deep breath in the belly and connecting with whatever you feel there is everything you need. For example, if you are in a difficult conversation, take a deep breath and check in - if there is anxiety in your belly, simply say, "I feel anxious right now."

Say this out loud, without asking anyone to do anything about it, simply use it as a way of connecting to your own feelings. This creates an openness for responding, feeling and relaxing into the conversation and provides an opportunity to connect with your underlying concerns and express yourself more clearly.

When you are next faced with part two of the ego's dance - breathe, feel and relax inside, express what you are feeling, sharing without expectation of the other's response. It is all part of the dance towards intimacy, being able to express yourself without judgement, so that you can equally enjoy all the different expressions and feelings that arise within relating. Staying open and responding in the difficult moments with your partner will lead to an enriched connection in your relating, as it creates mutual respect, feeling and expansion.

Martina Hughes of Tantric Blossoming has been actively exploring sacred sexuality, tantra, breathwork, energetic healing and shiatsu for over 8 years.

Martina's vision and passion is to inspire men and women of all ages to feel their own natural energy, joy, vitality and bliss. She facilitates a space of greater awareness, openness and receptivity for people to experience the essence and freedom of their inner being.

Martina offers mixed workshops, courses for women as well as Tantric consultations to women, men and couples to expand their knowledge and energy. For more information, visit www.tantricclossoming.com or phone 02 9664 1110.

