

Introduction

Have you ever felt unheard or misunderstood? Maybe your partner just doesn't seem to get why some things are important to you. Or perhaps your boss is seemingly oblivious to half the things you've pointed out in the past week.

You're not alone.

The number one reason for failed marriages? Poor communication. And what's one of the top reasons for a happy workplace and better productivity? Great communication.

Communication is at the root of who we are. It's the glue that holds any relationship together. Yet, most of us are either just getting by or are, frankly, terrible at it. Take me, for example . . .

Ten years ago, I was living a double life. By day, I was an award-winning marketing expert, advising my clients on how to communicate effectively to motivate consumers into action. NEXT, my marketing agency, was a huge success. What had started out in a corner of my bedroom had turned into one of the fastest-growing companies in British Columbia. I was working with some of Canada's most beloved brands, being regularly invited to speak at conferences and conventions, mentoring young female entrepreneurs, and absolutely rocking it from nine to five.

But by night, I was a last-place loser in the co-parenting competition with my ex-husband. It truly was a competition instead of a collaboration. And the communication between us? An epic failure. We couldn't exchange two words without ending up in a fight. I was so unsuccessful at motivating him to listen to my point of view that some days I wanted to cry (and often did). Although my words could inspire my clients, prospects, and consumers, I couldn't motivate my ex to pick my son up from soccer. No matter what I said to try to get him to understand, he didn't seem to hear me. And, not surprisingly, that made me angry.

I felt like a fraud. How was I so successful at work while being such an utter failure at home? Sadly, this was not the first time that bad communication had ruined a marriage for me. My co-parent was my second husband. My first marriage ended when I was still writing wedding thank-you cards and my husband confessed that marriage wasn't really his "deal."

I knew I needed to come to peace with the father of my children. It was the only way to save my sanity and give my kids the nurturing environment I knew they needed. I couldn't bring another man into the picture until I had achieved that. Besides, even though I had the title "communications expert" on my business cards, my kids were watching me fling nasty retorts at their

father as often as it rains in Vancouver (and for those who don't know Canada's West Coast, it rains a lot!). I was waiting for them to call me out on the incongruency, or worse, mirror my inappropriate behaviour.

One late evening, long after putting my toddlers to bed, I was struggling through the time-consuming task of enrolling them in extracurricular activities that aligned with my work schedule. Just as I was finishing up, the ping of my computer alerted me to an email from my ex-husband and co-parent. He was threatening not to pay any of the children's expenses unless I returned to our marriage. And, in that instant, my priority shifted to growing my business to ensure a steady income so I could weather the ups and downs of being an entrepreneur.

Fuelled by a sense of urgency, I conducted hours of online sleuthing, certain that there had to be a sales technique I could use to grow my business revenue quickly. Eventually, I landed on an old paperback from the sixties, Roy Garn's *The Magic Power of Emotional Appeal*.

Finding Garn's book was the culmination of years of my searching for every personal-development, marketing, and communication book I could get my hands on in an attempt to grow my business knowledge and to deal with life. I set goals to think and grow rich. Every day, I practised the seven habits of highly effective people. I changed my limiting beliefs to heal my life. I set out to win friends and influence people. I danced with the subtle art of not giving a f*ck. I made the four agreements. I tried calling myself a "badass," and I embraced all of my superpowers—the power of intention, the power of attraction, the power of connection, and the power of now. I mean, I did it all. And I still couldn't figure out the secret (sorry, Ms. Byrne). That's to say, I couldn't until I stumbled upon Garn's book.

After reading the book in one sitting, I had that eureka moment people often speak about: I realized why I had made the choices I did in my personal relationships, in my career, and even in my parenting. The book left me stunned. I immediately understood what my emotional appeals were, and I embraced them. And I know it sounds a little woo-woo, but I felt a huge release when I thought back to the decisions I had made in my relationships. Surprisingly, I felt vindicated. All my life's magical moments and bitter disappointments now made sense.

A few days later, I was compelled to share this experience with my employee, Saralyn. She was used to me excitedly entering the office on Monday mornings, bursting to share my working-weekend creations. I stumbled repeatedly as I enthusiastically summarized the key nuggets of the book for her. Crazy enough, she was able to pick out her own emotional appeals. I'll never forget the look on her face—a mashup of clarity, gratitude, and empathy. In that moment, I silently vowed to make Garn's material more

accessible and simpler so that people could more easily assess their own appeals, share them, and connect with the people they love. It was clear to me that Garn's appeals worked like magnets in human relationships. We attract or repel people based on whether we understand their needs and, most importantly, if we are able to express that understanding in our communication with them.

Although Garn's book was the kick-starter for my understanding, the book was more about persuading people with words that appealed to their needs but did not address how to create close human relationships based on understanding people's needs. And that's when my brain caught fire. Once I realized that people's emotional needs were driving their decisions, things became quite clear. For a marketer, this was gold.

I now understood what made people happy or unhappy in their relationships. And not just unhappy in romantic relationships but also in work relationships, family relationships, and friendships. I immediately began to develop the idea of the four Emotional Magnets that I will share with you in this book to help you improve your communication.

Recognizing that people have emotional needs that must be met to create successful communication was helpful, but applying this knowledge to my clients and their businesses was what made me a true believer. Amazingly, I began to experience significant improvements in my business. However, sadly, my personal life remained much the same—my ex and I were still fighting, and I was still suffering from the uncertainty of co-parenting—but that was all about to change.

You might be familiar with the overwhelming predicament of not being able to communicate productively in your personal life. But when you apply the principles outlined in this book, you will be able to increase personal intimacy and strengthen the bonds of your relationships. You will feel heard, accepted, and understood. You'll also be able to minimize conflict, not by sidestepping issues but by facing them in such a way that they can be resolved. You will be able to identify why people make the choices they do. Furthermore, you'll find out what motivates you and others. This new understanding won't just help you communicate better, it will also help you make better choices for yourself and those around you.

That's not to say that people don't have to take responsibility for their actions. We're all responsible for what we do. It just becomes a lot easier to understand our actions when we know what our Emotional Magnets are. Once we become aware of what motivates us, we can learn to tame our impulses. And when we understand what motivates other people, our empathy for them and our interactions with them improve.

I've written this book as a simple and practical guide for heightening your self-awareness around emotional needs—your own and others'—and improving your ability to communicate in a way that positively engages and influences others in a win-win way. But I do want to be clear that I am not a psychologist; I am a communications expert. I'm not here to tell you what experiences cause what emotional needs to be triggered, beyond what is obvious, such as people's need for safety during a pandemic. However, I hope that knowing people's motivators and speed bumps, which I will explain in detail in Part Two, will help you feel more empathy and boost your compassion, two key attributes of effective communication.

My hope is that this book will teach you to become an Emotional Magnet by changing how you communicate. When you speak to people's emotional needs, not only will you be heard and understood, you'll also be able to understand what people truly want—and how to deliver it.

In Part One, I'll explain how the Emotional Magnets work to attract or repel people's interest and what communication barriers block Emotionally Magnetic communication. Get ready to be blown away when you see how many of us use lots of communication blockers without even knowing it!

Part Two of the book is the really juicy part. As I take you through the Emotional Magnets in detail, I am betting that names of friends, family, and colleagues will burst into your head like popcorn as you read it.

Finally, Part Three of the book is focused on boosting your Emotional Magnetism. You'll have the opportunity to test yourself with the Emotional Magnets quiz and learn the four easy steps to becoming an Emotional Magnet in your relationships. Also, as a bonus feature, I've listed further recommended reading, along with additional resources, on my website, SandyGerber.com.

Today, I accept people for what they emotionally need, and, because of that, I love them more. If I had to put a name on that shift in my thinking (I name everything! I'm a marketer), I'd say I'm creating a love train. My philosophy: the more of us there are who want to learn, communicate, and share our Emotional Magnets, the more connections we create, the more relationships we nurture and potentially save, and the more love we create in this world.

So, are you ready for some Emotional Magnetism?