

Nine Roles For Constructive Communication And Conflict Resolution

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ROLES TO DO WITH THE SELF	ROLES TO DO WITH THE RELATIONSHIP	ROLES TO DO WITH THE OTHER PERSON
<p style="text-align: center;">COURAGEOUS ADVENTURER</p> <p>Make a decision to act in a new way and move forward even if you are scared.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRUST BUILDING VISIONARY</p> <p>Create a common purpose with the other person and build trust that you are sincere in wanting a positive outcome</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTIVE LISTENER</p> <p>Put yourself in the other person's shoes, enter their world, and let them know what you understand about how it is for them.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SELF ACCEPTING ENCOURAGER</p> <p>Accept and encourage yourself, regardless of how you feel, and the mistakes you have made. If you are unsuccessful, encourage yourself to keep going.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CREATIVE ORGANISER</p> <p>Organize a time and place to get together, which creates the best chance of success. e.g. relaxing surroundings on neutral ground, enough time, no interruptions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NAIVE ENQUIRER</p> <p>Ask a naive, non-judgemental question. This requires a genuine wanting to understand. "How come....?" works better than "why....."</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">TRUTH SPEAKER</p> <p>Speak your own truth letting the other person know your thoughts, feelings and impulses. Feelings may include, your anger, hurt, fear, regret, intention and/or love.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">REFLECTIVE META-COMMUNICATOR</p> <p>Communicate about the way the interaction is going. e.g.. "we've both started to raise our voices", or "we've gone off onto another subject now"</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GENEROUS HEART</p> <p>To move towards someone with a desire to improve the relationship, when you are feeling hurt, angry or distrustful is an act of will and requires a good deal of generosity.</p>

Nine Roles

Observation of people who are good communicators reveals that they have a number of abilities which facilitate their communications. These abilities can best be described using the role theory of Jacob Moreno. Dr. Moreno, the founder of the Psychodrama Method, defined a role as a particular way of being in world at a particular time. The role is made up of the thoughts, beliefs, feelings and actions of a person in any moment. Naming of roles is an excellent way of identifying what works and what doesn't when conflict arises. I have identified nine roles which are helpful in constructive communication and conflict resolution. These roles are outlined in the table overleaf.

Guidelines

- Be prepared to make mistakes, and stay self-accepting.
- Stay on one subject matter till a resolution or new understanding is reached. If the other person changes the subject, assure them that you are willing to discuss this new subject matter at some other time and gently bring them back to the original subject.
- Be aware of **thoughts, feelings and impulses** in the other person, and in yourself and try to draw out expression of all three. (See “Roles to do with the other person” on the chart).
- Be aware when past events are contaminating the present interaction. Acknowledge to yourself when this happens and try and stay in the present.
- Keep reminding yourself and the other person of your goal to create a more harmonious relationship.
- Only one person has to be able to be a good communicator for a conflict to be resolved. Therefore take 100% responsibility for the outcome, and learn from your mistakes. Stay self-loving.
- Keep going even when the other person has given up! You may need to leave them to think about it and then try again.