



The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals

Susan Gillis Chapman

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals

Susan Gillis Chapman

The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals Susan Gillis Chapman

Good communication is essential to any healthy relationship, whether it's between spouses, family members, friends, or co-workers, and mindfulness—the practice of nonjudgmental awareness—can help us communicate more effectively and meaningfully with others in our personal and professional lives. Here, Susan Chapman, a psychotherapist and long-time Buddhist practitioner, explains how the practice of mindfulness awareness can change the way we speak and listen, enhance our relationships, and help us achieve our goals.

Chapman highlights five key elements of mindful communication—silence, mirroring, encouraging, discerning, and responding—that make it possible for us to listen more deeply to others and to develop greater clarity and confidence about how to respond. Other topics include

- identifying your communication patterns and habits;
- uncovering the hidden fears that often sabotage communication;
- staying open in the midst of difficult conversations so that we can respond wisely and skillfully;
- and learning how mindful communication can help us to become more truthful, compassionate, and flexible in our relationships.

The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals Details

Date : Published April 10th 2012 by Shambhala

ISBN : 9781590309414

Author : Susan Gillis Chapman

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Psychology, Self Help, Personal Development, Language, Communication

 [Download The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep List ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Li ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals Susan Gillis Chapman

From Reader Review The Five Keys to Mindful Communication: Using Deep Listening and Mindful Speech to Strengthen Relationships, Heal Conflicts, and Accomplish Your Goals for online ebook

Caron Staney says

Reads like a Zen book of communication.

Heidi says

Dit is een fantastisch boek. De auteur, psychologe en boeddhiste, legt zeer gedetailleerd uit wat de opeenvolgende stappen zijn om tot een betekenisvolle communicatie te komen volgens de traditie van mindfulness en boeddhisme. De theoretische uitleg en de oefeningen om dit mindful communiceren te leren zijn helder. Het boek is doorspekt met ervaringen uit haar praktijk als psychologe, haar vrienden en haar leraren tijdens de negen jaar die ze in de Gampo Abdij in Canada doorbracht. Tien of twintig jaar terug zou ik quasi niets van dit boek gesnapt hebben en het zelfs afgedaan als zweverig geleuter, maar eenmaal je vertrouwd bent met de basis van de boeddhistische leer vat je echt wat je wil bereiken. Dit boek heeft me enorm veel geleerd. Ik heb het ondertussen twee keer gelezen, maar het zal niet bij die 2 keer blijven. Het nodigt uit om te oefenen, oefenen en blijven oefenen...

Suzanne Crane says

This book really helped me understand the next step in my personal & professional growth. It came at just the right time, too! I have numerous gifts, but two things that have been holding me back are: 1. distracted listening (letting my mind fill with my own ideas rather than properly processing what's happening right in front of me first) and 2. letting my overactive mind build a story around something that may or may not be truth & then treating it as the truth (perception vs reality). I think meditation will be key for me to make headway with both, as it will allow me to practice the intentional removal of stray thoughts from a quiet & clear mind. Stay tuned - 7 Habits are next!!

Keets says

Third time reading. I learn something new and valuable each time. Reminders to stay open have been lifesaving.

Just finished my second full reading of this book and plan on starting it all over again immediately. The principles of mindful communication are truly life-changing and I've learned so much over the past year as I've applied lessons from and re-read this book.

At the beginning I wasn't sure about this book, but the deeper in I got, the more relevant and useful it became. Excellent tips and practices about growing more mindful in our communications. I especially

appreciated the attention to the concept of "toxic certainty."

Suzanne says

Listening is the best tool for good communication - Ms Chapman gives us many tools and relevant examples. I know I will read this again to study and apply for better relationships. Some of the 'handles' or catch phrases for the tools were too pre-school for me but I get the point. Give a new style an easy handle to pull out of the thoughts to use as needed until a tool becomes a habit.

Anastasia says

Excellent read from a European based family and marriage expert. Chapman takes the ideas of conversation beyond the family unit by expanding and applying the communication techniques to encompass needs of a much broader audience. Considering a woeful lack of heart to heart conversations in our digital content driven culture, I found the book to be a wonderful reminder to slow down and simply talk.

- Mindful Presence (awake body, tender heart, open mind)
 - Mindful Listening (encouragement)
 - Mindful Speech (gentleness)
 - Mindful Relationships (unconditional friendliness)
 - Mindful Responses (playfulness)
-

Sarah says

Interesting application of mindfulness and meditation to communication and the relationships we have both with ourselves and others. The shift from a me-first mentality to we-first has powerful implications.

Jeff says

This book explores various relationship issues through heavy use of metaphor. Toxic situations, red-yellow-green light patterns, open mind and open heart, unconditional friendliness, we first vs me first. I found the recommendations interesting, but not very insightful. Most of the situations seem fairly common and I agree with the premise that people who are focused on their own benefits over others tend to be the source of problems. Most of the lessons in this book are things we learned in Kindergarten. We may have forgotten those lessons, or been hurt somehow and build up defensive patterns.

Rose says

Review to come. I thought this was a very useful examination of using mindfulness practices to have deeper understanding and resonance among our conversations with other people. The author advocates a "we-first" approach to interpersonal communication practices, rather than what the author calls a "me-first" approach that's dominant in our society. There's quite a bit of useful information to take from this work, so I hope I can

expound upon it in my upcoming review.

Cathy says

Discussion of communication strategies.

Jones Patrick says

The essential thought of this book is that if a man lives from a "we-first" point of view instead of a "me-first" perspective, both that individual and those that he or she come into contact with will have the advantage.

As indicated by Chapman, the best approach to mindful communication is the thing that she calls the 'five key components,' which are silence, mirroring, encouraging, discerning, and responding. These abilities empower us to listen all the more deeply, to ourselves and to others.

Valuable methods that the author recommends to help in this procedure of opening up include naming listening as either green-light, red-light or yellow-light examples.

Red-light is the point at which we would prefer not to tune in, or when we are diverted to the point that we can't hear them.

Yellow-light listening is when there is confusion in the matter of whether genuine listening is occurring or not.

Things I favored from this book:

- * It has numerous methods & strategies to change negative methods for listening and reacting to others into extremely positive ones.

- * Chapman gives cases of how individuals have been casualties they could call their own negative habits and how to overcome it.

- * How to have or create happier relationships not based on Me-first, but on We-first.

GONZA says

Clear and well written, this book starts from mindfulness to achieve the perfect listeners and talkers, this is the best way to strength your relationship. Nothing particularly new, we already have Nardone in Italy that is following that path, but it's always interesting reading something about mindfulness communication.

Chiaro e ben scritto, questo libro parte dalla mindfulness (consapevolezza) per farci diventare il migliore tra gli ascoltatori e i comunicatori, in modo da rafforzare le nostre relazioni. Niente di particolarmente nuovo, in Italia Nardone ne parla da tempo, ma per quanto mi riguarda è sempre molto interessante leggere qualcosa sulla comunicazione mindfulness.

THANKS TO NETGALLEY AND SHAMBHALA FOR THE PREVIEW

Camia Young says

This book took what had been largely subconscious and allowed me to start to notice my own communication patterns. I look forward to practicing what I learned in this accessible book.

Alyx Tschirhart says

I read/listened to this book on my Audible app. I would highly recommend this to all. I only read this for 30-45 minutes at a time since it's quite a lot to metabolize.

This helped me to look at myself with neutrality and realize the things I'm better at and the parts of me that could be improved. The strategies and topics discussed were applicable to both my work and home life. It may help improve not only your relationships with others, but also with yourself.

However, I do believe I will be listening to this at least one more time. With so much information thrown at you, I'm sure I missed out on something that will make it worth re-reading.

While listening to this, it almost becomes daunting to go through the day because you are more aware of your reactions and communications at a much more elevated level.

This is a book that would probably be worth having on your shelf.

Morgan Blackledge says

I love to write ridiculously long Goodreads reviews. But I'm guessing most people don't love to read them. So here's my nutshell summary of the book.

The keys to Mindful Communication are: be embodied, be present, be accepting, be kind, be encouraging, pause, listen deeply, speak your authentically warm, playful truth and just say YES to what emerges.

If that's enough than feel free to skip the rest.

But if you're thirsty for more, than by all means, slake thy thirst at the aforementioned font of copious verbiage.

Me vs. We:

Suesan Gillis-Chapman begins her discussion on Mindfull Communication by identifying the difference between Me First and We First communication.

Me First Communication:

When one or both participants are trying to impart their information on the other without much regard for what the other person (a) has to say (b) is thinking (c) is feeling.

We First Communication:

When both participants are genuinely attuned, collaborative, and responsive to the other, and there is mutual exchange of information, the conversation is We First.

Workin' in the COAL Mine:

Danieal Siegel's acronym (he's the king of acronyms) for this We First orientation is COAL.

It stands for Curious, Open, Excepting, Loving. If we're COAL with one another, then we're cool with one another. We're We First.

I <3 Bubers:

Ms. Gillis-Chapman kicks it old school by citing Martin Buber's (Not to be confused with Justin Bieber or Michael Buble) I and It/Thou framework for understanding relationships.

Buber breaks it down like so:

I/IT:

The attitude of the "I" towards an "IT", is the attitude of I towards an object.

I/THOU:

The attitude of the "I" towards "THOU", is the attitude of I in relationship to another being.

When I relate to you as an IT (an object rather than a being), I may view our communication as an opportunity to download my information on to you without much regard for actually listening to you.

The exchange of information is more or less one way. Much like a programmers relationship to a computer. I => IT.

This is a trait that I like to refer to as "Pump and Dump" and it's just plain RUDE!

When I relate to you as THOU (another being with a vast universe within), there is mutual respect, regard and parity of freely flowing information. I=THOU

Ms. Gillis-Chapman borrows heavily from Buber when she refers to the distinction between "ME First" conversations and WE First" conversations.

She Dropped a Bohm On Me:

Ms. Gillis-Chapman also cites physicist David Bohm as an influence.

David Bohm was a thought leader in the humanist movement. Bohm's later career was devoted to promoting Bohmian Dialogue, a form of freely-flowing group conversation in which participants practice nonjudgmental listening and authentic speech in an attempt to reach a common understanding.

The Latin roots of the word Dialog is: Dia, meaning flow, (think diarrhea) and Logos meaning information (think corporate Logo). Two very unpleasant examples, but you (hopefully) catch my drift.

A dialog is the flow of information, or better yet, an open, collaborative exchange of meaning in which both parties are somehow enriched as a result.

Bohm referred to I/THOU, Bohmian conversations as Transformational Dialogs.

This is (obviously) analogous to what Ms. Gillis-Chapman refers to as Transformational Conversations i.e. conversations that engender interpersonal exploration, shared insight and mutual growth.

Mr. Rogers Neighborhood:

Ms. Gillis-Chapman also cites psychologist Carl Rogers as an influence. Carl Rogers was instrumental in the humanistic person-centered psychotherapy movement of the 1960's and 70's.

Rogers identified the following as the necessary and sufficient requisite qualities of the process of effective therapy.

Therapeutic Alliance: a strong relationship between client and therapist.

Therapist congruence, or genuineness: the therapists outward words and behavior match their inside (feelings). They are genuine in their behavior, they are not "acting".

Therapist unconditional positive regard (UPR): the therapist accepts the client unconditionally, without judgment.

Therapist empathic understanding: the therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference. In other words the therapist has an authentic feel for how the client feels.

Client perception: that the client perceives, to at least a minimal degree, the therapist's UPR and empathic understanding. In other words the client "feels felt".

Ms. Gillis-Chapman borrows from Rogers when she identifies encouragement and unconditional friendliness as several the necessary qualities of Mindful Communication.

Ms. Gillis-Chapman integrates all of the aforementioned influences with elements of the Buddhist traditions in her model of Mindful Communication.

Mindful Communication:

Mindful Communication entails mindfully (a) observing the communication at the level of process (rather than becoming exclusively captivated by the content) and (b) guiding the conversation into the WE First domain of open, mutual communication.

So what exactly is the authors framework for the process of Mindful Communication?

To answer that question, let's begin at the beginning.

What the fuck is mindfulness?

Just incase you have been living in a cave for the past decade:

"mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, without prejudgment".

Jon Kabat-Zinn.

The nice thing about Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition of mindfulness is it's fairly precise and widely agree upon.

But it's also pretty fuckin boring and uninspiring, particularly after the 10,000th recitation.

In typical baby boomer style, Ms. Gillis-Chapman jazzes things up a bit with her terse, poetic, insightful and creative reflections on Mindfulness.

"Mindfulness is a means of taking a break from our struggle to survive".

"Mindfulness allows us to bear witness to the flow of our experience rather than being captivated by it".

"Mindfulness enables us to step out of our past and future concerns, and into the present moment where we can simply relax".

Analogously, she observes that Mindful Communication allows us to bear witness to the flow and process of our communications with others, so that we may simply BE with them with no other agenda other than to listen deeply and speak the truth.

Listening Deeply:

According to Ms. Gillis-Chapman, Mindfull Listening operates at the most fundamental level of our awareness.

The Three Ways we receive information in Mindfull Communication are via:

- 1: Awake Body (continuity of feeling awareness)
- 2: Tender Heart (emotional awareness)
- 3: Open Mind (nonjudgmental, here and now, present moment orientation)

It's All About the Process:

As previously mentioned, rather than focusing exclusively on the content of the words exchanged. Ms. Gillis-Chapman prioritizes maintaining an awareness of the process level flow of communication.

Stop In The Name Of Love:

She offers the following Stoplight Metaphor as an aid in identifying the various states of conversational flow.

Red Light (communication that is closed)

Green Light (communication that is open)

Yellow Light (communication that is somewhere-in-between)

Her rule of thumb is; go with the green, stop at the red, yield at the yellow.

Tea Time:

To further elucidate the stoplight metaphor, Ms. Gillis-Chapman employs the Tea Cup metaphor.

Listening is like pouring a cup of tea. It's best when the cup is clean and empty.

This just means it's easier to listen when there is space in your mental and emotional container i.e. when you yourself are not preoccupied or emotionally flooded.

The clean empty cup is like the Green Light (open communication condition) of the Stoplight metaphor.

Trying to listen while otherwise preoccupied is like pouring tea into a cracked cup, where the tea leaks out all over the place.

This is analogous to the yellow light (partially impaired communication condition) in the Stoplight metaphor.

Finally, trying to talk to somebody who doesn't give a fuck, or who is otherwise unreceptive to your message it's like trying to pour tea into an upside down cup.

Thy cup runneth over, in the bad way, if ya know what I'm sayin'

The upside down cup is of course analogous to the red light (Close communication condition) in the stoplight metaphor.

BTW: Using a metaphor to elucidate another metaphor, reminds me of the metaphor of the shepherd who used a thorn to extract another thorn from a lions paw. But now were like three metaphors deep so I guess I should just stop it.

At least I fucking know that I don't fucking know:

By needing to feel like we Know (K) something when we are in fact uncertain, we avoid the anxiety we feel when we Don't Know (DK) but we expose ourselves to the vulnerability of our blind spot i.e. the things we don't know that we don't know (DKDK).

When we are blind (K) to the fact that we have blind spots (DKDK), we are doomed to play out what ever behavior our ignorance and denial would have us do.

It's ignorance with the felt sense of total self assurance and complete self righteousness.

What could possibly go wrong?

Don't You Know That You're Toxic:

Being bad at not knowing is what Ms. Gillis-Chapman refers to as Toxic Certainty.

If what we want is to be right, and persuade or cajole others into seeing things from our perspective, than even by those standards, Toxic Certainty is usually a fail.

In his phenomenal book The Righteous Mind, moral psychologist (not necessarily an oxymoron) Jonathan Haidt demonstrates that our feelings of certainty that fuel our moral, political and religious convictions stem from deeply unconscious intuitions, not from logical, rational deductions.

Almost everyone, when presented with good (or even conclusive) evidence that challenges our (political, religious or whatever) position, we (a) discount the contrary evidence and (b) overvalue the evidence for our position. Even if we know about this particular bias.

Trying to persuade or cajole others with rhetoric usually ends in alienation and rupture to the relationship.

Think about a debate between an Atheist and a Fundamentalist. Think about how few of these exhausting spectacles result in a conversion, or even in an actual conversation (i.e. an authentic exchange of listening and asking questions)

The near inevitable result of the debate is both sides become even more entrenched in their positions and even more polarized.

It is possible to influence one another, but not if the "Red Light" is on. In order to actually influence one another, we need a Green Light.

We typically only have Green Light (open) communication with someone with whom we have a strong relationship with. What us psychotherapists like to call a strong Join or Therapeutic Alliance.

If our objective is to build these relationships of open communication and mutual influence, than listening with genuine openness and unconditional positive regard is utterly essential. But beyond that, countering Toxic Certainty with a genuine willingness to Not Know (DK) is also essential.

It's the wisdom embedded in the old therapy chestnut "would you rather be right, or married"?

If the focus is on building relationships first. Than abandoning Toxic Certainty is germane.

In other words, if you want to be a good communicator (a good friend, partner, coworker, therapist whatever), than you better start getting real good at Not Knowing. Or at least faking it till we make it ;-)

Top 10 Buddhist Lists:

I'm not a Buddhist and I never (ever) will be. I'm not an anything and I'm keeping that way. I'm allergic to religion and I loath philosophical dogma.

But I have spent an inordinate amount of time around Buddhists. I did my graduate training at a Buddhist university, I teach at that same university, I have a Buddhist meditation practice and I have participated in lots of Buddhist meditation events and retreats.

If there is one thing I have learned about Buddhists after literally decades of close contact with them is that they fucking LOVE lists.

The 4 Nobel Truths, The 8 Fold Path, The 5 Scandhas. It goes on and on.

So in good Buddhist form, Ms. Gillis-Chapman begins and ends her book with a list.

The Five Keys (core values) of Mindful Communication.

1. Mindful Presence:

As mentioned earlier, the necessary conditions of Mindful Presence are; awake body, tender heart, open mind.

The #1 way to train for these qualities is via mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness Meditation is how we learn to rest in the present moment symbolized as the green light. Mindfulness is how we clean and empty our tea cup.

Within this atmosphere of mindful inner spaciousness, thoughts are free to come and go without being acted upon. Cultivating this space is absolutely necessary for getting out of Me First and into We First.

2. Mindful Listening:

The key to Mindful Listening is Encouragement. The (Rogerian) practice is to listen to others with "unconditional positive regard".

The obstacle to Encouragement is Toxic Certainty, the false righteousness that propagates discouragement and alienation.

We overcome this obstacle by shining the light of Encouragement inward. By practicing unconditional positive self regard.

3. Mindful Speech:

My old clinical supervisor used to say "if you speed, you get a ticket. Meaning if you try to go to fast with a client, or push them, you end up with a ruptured relationship.

The key to gentle (nonviolent) speech is learning to stop when the light is red.

Working with the slogan "go with the green, stop at the red, be carful when the light is yellow" instructs the process by which skillfully "stay with the client (or conversation partner) and (hopefully) never get ahead of the client, or worse, transgress a subtle (or not so subtle) boundary and end up seriously alienating them.

4. Mindful Relationships:

The key to Mindful Relationships is Unconditional Friendliness.

As the famous relationship researcher John Gottman put it. As a rule of thumb, you need 5 positive interactions for every 1 negative interaction in relationship. People are a lot more sensitive to negative interactions than positive interactions, and the "negs" rack up very quickly.

Unconditional Friendliness means always meeting the client (or conversation partner) with all of the positive openness and warmth associated with acceptance and hospitality.

Again, providing Unconditional Friendliness to others begins with giving it to yourself. These kinds of self love instructions often leave people cold. They think of Stuart Smalley giving himself a hug.

Relating to your self with Unconditional Friendliness is actually a much more subtle and deeply intimate practice than all that. It requires real self compassion and presence. Cultivating this inner quality enables one to genuinely demonstrate it towards others.

5. Mindful Response:

The Key to Mindful Responsiveness is to remain authenticity playful and to always (on some level) say yes.

I have a friend who is absolutely masterful at improve comedy. He performs with an improv group called Three For All. They do the usual shtick of improvising a funny story based "random" audience suggestions.

It looks like magic when they do it. I asked my friend what their secret was and he said "never say no, always say YES.

If your partner leads with "isn't it amazing that were standing here in Chernobyl" and you come back with "yes, Chernobyl is amazing today" than you are off and running. If you come back with "no, we're not in Chernobyl", then the bit has a tendency to just die right then and there.

This is akin to what Ms. Gillis-Chapman refers to as Surfing the Wave of Coincidence. Playfully saying YES to what emerges in the present moment and capitalizing on opportunities while concurrently playfully "rolling with the resistance" and turning obstacles into opportunities to connect.

Strategies of control block access to playfully creatively engaging with what's emerging in the here and now.

In Conclusion:

This is a very worthwhile read, especially if you are in the business of working with people. And frankly, pretty much all business entails working with people.

But this is a particularly worthwhile read if you're therapist or doctor or in some other helping profession in which joining and collaborating is essential.

Ms. Gillis-Chapman has done a very respectable job of clearly explaining how to best cultivate the necessary and sufficient skills for mindful communication.

Highly recommended.