

TASTE OF **OXYGEN**

EVENTS

*BREAKING BARRIERS TO*

# COMMUNICATION



## • STUDY GUIDE •

Understand the difference between listening and hearing and why both are important to build greater intimacy.

# WELCOME TO COMMUNICATION — A TASTE OF OXYGEN EVENT

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM TODAY'S SESSION:

We won't solve all of your communication or relationship issues, but we will give you some helpful tools to use and resources to explore in the future.

You will walk away with a better understanding of what makes a great communicator, and even better, you will have communication tools that can be used in your relationships TODAY.

You will not be asked to speak about something you do not wish to talk about publicly.



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# GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Poor listeners tend to interrupt and impatiently wait to make their point. While you are talking, they are often thinking about what they want to say next.

Most people tend to be passive listeners, picking up only those things that relate to them, rather than what the other person is experiencing.

The opposite of passive listening is listening with empathy.

Listening with empathy is truly listening to what the other person is saying. Instead of waiting for an opening to get your own point across, you are willing to listen with the sole intent of understanding what the other person thinks, means, and feels – NOT to judge, rebut, advise, or contradict.

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**Listening with empathy is a learned skill.**

**It's not something people generally develop automatically.**

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## NOTES:

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Learn how to create an argument-free marriage on the **OXYGEN Show Podcast** with Fawn Weaver, author of [The Argument-Free Marriage](#) at [StrongerFamilies.com](#). Sign up for a Premium Membership to enjoy the full podcast (see back cover for more details about Premium Memberships).

# COUPLELOGUE



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## STEP 1: MIRRORING

This step involves listening and repeating back what you have just heard to clarify that you understand what was said. The speaker uses "I" statements. Example: *"Lately, I feel..."* or *"Lately, I don't feel..."*

During this time, the listener's job is to simply listen. The listener will have the opportunity to respond later. After the speaker is finished, the listener "mirrors" what she or he has just heard. Example: *"What I heard you say is..."*

Once the speaker has confirmed that the listener has accurately mirrored, the listener invites the speaker to continue by asking, *"Is there more?"* If yes, the process repeats. If no, then you move on to step two.

## STEP 2: VALIDATION

The goal of this step is to make sure that the speaker feels validated. In other words, knowing that what he or she has just said matters and has value, whether or not you agree with what was said. An example of validation is to say, *"I can understand how you would think..."* or *"I see why that bothers you."*

## STEP 3: EMPATHY

The goal of empathy is to try to feel what your partner is feeling. Communicating empathy can sound like: *"I can imagine you might be feeling..."* or *"If I were in your shoes, I might feel... Do you feel like that?"* Then, trade roles. The listener now speaks, and the speaker listens.

# PERCEPTION... IS IT REALITY?

In a study by analyst and social researcher Shaunti Feldhahn, people were asked if they care about their spouse. Almost across the board, and even among struggling couples, people said, "yes, I care about my spouse." This was true even during painful times in the relationship. People were then asked if they believed that their spouse cared about them during an argument. Many more said "no"

More than likely, your spouse does care about you and does want you to be happy.

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Believe that **your spouse has good intentions** toward you.

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## NOTES:

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Discover more keys to a highly happy marriage on the **OXYGEN Show podcast** featuring Shaunti Feldhahn, author of [The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages](#) at [StrongerFamilies.com](#). Sign up for a Premium Membership to enjoy the full podcast (see back cover for more details about Premium Memberships).

# NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

People are more likely to believe your nonverbal communication than what you say out loud.



Facial Expressions



Gestures



Tone of Voice



Body Language



Personal Space



Eye Contact



Touch



Appearance



Artifacts

Different personality types generally demonstrate different non-verbal behavior, both good and bad.

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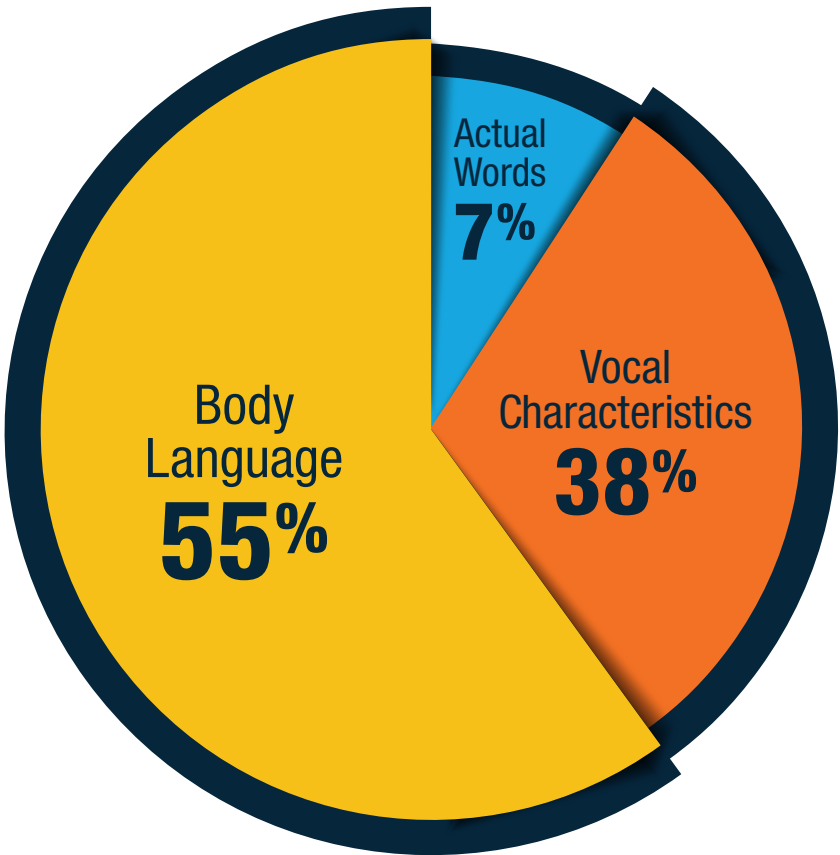
**No personality type is better than another.**  
**Each one is different, and different is not bad. It's just...different!**

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# THE MEHRABIAN FORMULA



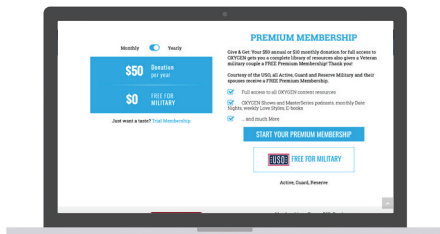
# MORE WAYS TO GET HELP FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

## GET STARTED WITH THE OXYGEN PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP

Let Stronger Families help you create a deeper, more joyful connection with a Premium Membership!

Sign up at [www.strongerfamilies.com/oxygen-membership/](http://www.strongerfamilies.com/oxygen-membership/) and start receiving important relationship tools and resources today.

- Podcasts with nationally acclaimed relationship experts
- Creative date-night ideas
- Tips for improving romance and intimacy
- Much more!



## JOIN US ON SOCIAL

Find additional resources, stories and ideas on the Stronger Families Facebook or Instagram channels. Scan the QR code or go to [www.strongerfamilies.com/social](http://www.strongerfamilies.com/social) to find the latest!



## SHARE YOUR OXYGEN EXPERIENCE

How did your OXYGEN experience go? Any tools or concepts stand out as particularly helpful? Anything we can do to improve? We'd love to hear your relationship story! Email [events@strongerfamilies.org](mailto:events@strongerfamilies.org) or fill out the post-event survey at <https://bit.ly/oxy-survey> to share your feedback.

