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COMMUNICATION THEORY AND PRACTICE



Theory and Practice of the Innate Capacity of Communication

Richard B. Smith

THE VALUE OF COMMUNICATION THEORIES

The appreciation and study of human communication arises from research, observation, practice, and theories that explain the phenomena, realities, and facts of communication; the various components, characteristics, and qualities of human expression and exchange; and the innumerable circumstances, conditions, events, and experiences it creates, in our occurring world, throughout life.

Communication theories, as systematic, scientific explanations, offer principles and practices, models and metaphors, patterns and paradigms that unify and clarify facts, that define and describe the essence of expression and exchange, that create comprehension and understanding for interactivity and its influence and effect on being and becoming, on existence and reality, through countless circumstances, conditions, contexts, and events experienced in life. Although no theory offers an absolute explanation or representation of reality, we advance our comprehension and understanding of communication – we advance our skills, practice, and proficiency – using the facts, components, and qualities of human expression and exchange in theory.

OBSERVATION, RESEARCH, PRACTICE, AND THEORY

Working nearly fifty years in the business of business communications as a communications specialist, strategist, creative director, writer, and designer, to mention a few areas of my experience and expertise, I have always been fascinated in the nature of human expression and exchange especially in learning and knowing what works and what doesn't work to produce intended outcomes. Accordingly, I have a deep interest in the exploration, observation, study, and research of communication and the practical, productive application of models and theories, assumptions and ideals, opinions and principles. My background in business communications includes promotional and motivational communications; advertising; public and professional relations; internal and external corporate communications; technical, educational, clinical, and scientific writing; public speaking and broadcast media; professional education, instruction, and training programs; and leadership training and personal coaching. Besides the research of professionals and theorists, I have also conducted various forms of research over the years for my clients including surveys, one-on-one studies, image and message testing, focus groups, market analyses, and more.

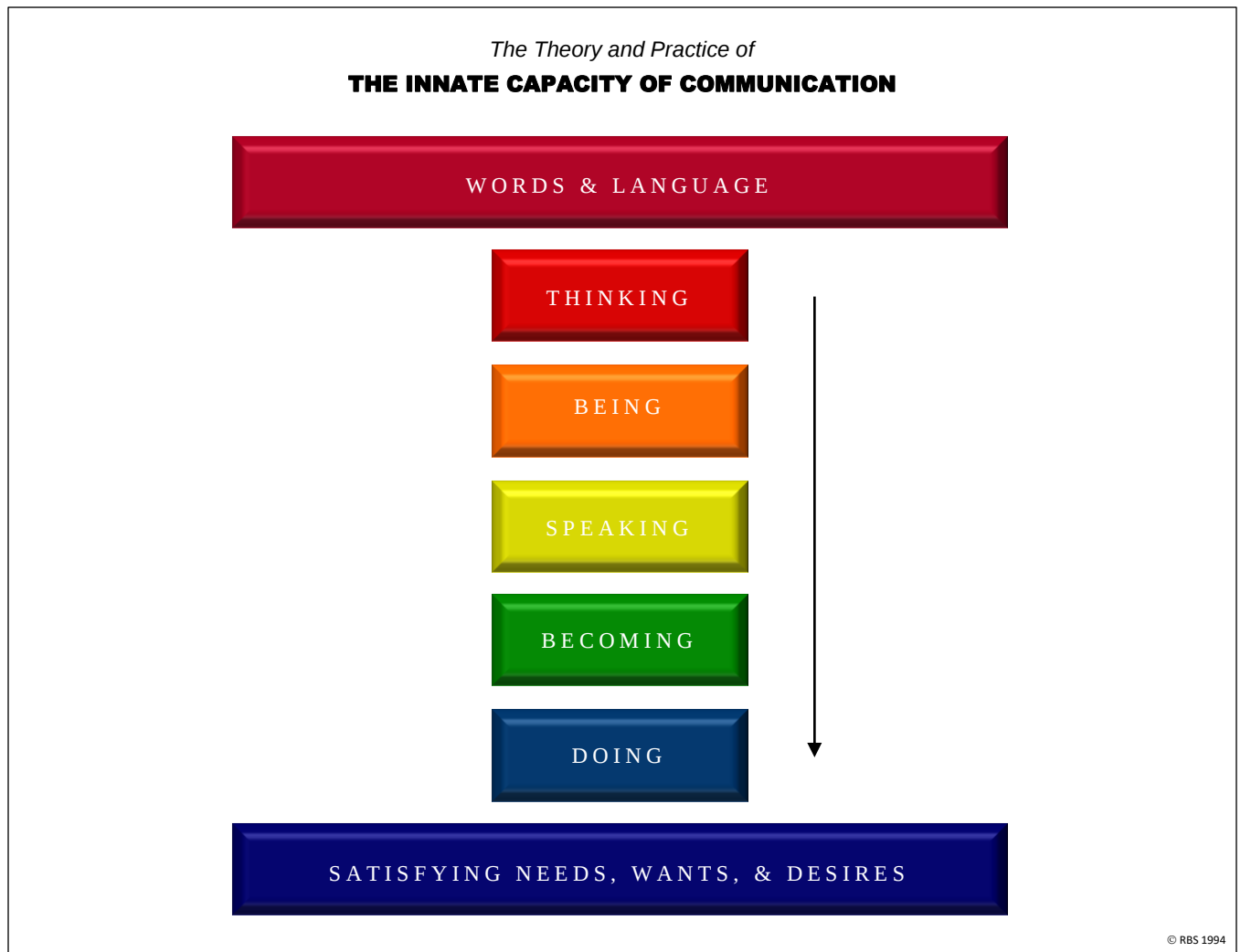
In my expertise and experience, I have come to recognize certain facts, realities, and phenomena of human communication; accordingly, I have established a series of theories, based on universal truths, which advance our knowledge and understanding of expression and exchange, which advance our skills, practice, and proficiency for achieving full self-expression, for reaching desired outcomes, for satisfying our needs, wants, and desires in life. The Theory and Practice of the Innate Capacity of Communication is four in a series.

INTUITIVE CAPACITY OF COMMUNICATION

It is well known that humans are born with an innate linguistic capacity, a facility and aptitude for words and language. We think of the linguistic capacity as a means of speech and communication and yet words and language also provide a foundation for thinking and reasoning, being and consciousness. Born with the basic rules for language and a predisposition to learn language, the human brain, in our consciousness and being, acquires language at specific stages in the developmental process by means of thinking and reasoning. Without words and language, there is neither intelligence nor existence as we would know it.

Besides a foundation for thinking and reasoning, words and language are at the source of our identity and individuality as well as our connections and relationships in the world in which we live. We name and identify, define and describe, compare and contrast, associate and connect, distinguish and differentiate people, thoughts, and things. We use words and language to portray experiences in our occurring world giving voice to our thoughts and feelings, opinions and viewpoints, judgements and beliefs; expressing our perspectives, perceptions, and preferences. As a final point, words and language are also at the source of taking actions, for individually and collectively doing, producing, and accomplishing things in life.

The Theory and Practice of the Innate Capacity of Communication is concerned with words and language and their influence and importance in thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing. This theory is concerned with our ability to effectively and efficiently communicate and to create relationships so that we can fulfill on and satisfy our needs, wants, and desires in life. We communicate, create, and relate effectively in how we choose our words, in how we use our words, and in how our words have an impact on our thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing.



IMPACT ON THINKING

The innate capacity for words and language presents the greatest impact on our thinking. Representing thoughts and things in our contemplation and consciousness; words and language access and retrieve thinking. Words and language name that which we perceive, experience, know, and understand in life. They give us the ability to define, describe, and designate anything and everything.

In our thinking, we think unconsciously. However, when we think consciously about thinking, it occurs subsequently, after the fact, as a way of making sense of what we have thought. We make sense of thinking through words and language. Originating in conscious thought, words and language give us the ability to express and explain that which we perceive and experience, that which we think and feel, that which we reason and understand. Words and language give us the ability to think consciously. Even in our mind's eye and ear, we think of images in the words and language that define and describe cerebral depictions and visualizations and in the same manner, we think of music, voices, and other sounds in the words and language that define and describe them.

In our thinking, words and language access every manner of conscious thought from perceptions and beliefs to attitudes and values, from intellectual and emotional thoughts to thoughts of imagination and invention, remembrance and recall. Words and language create awareness for thinking; they open thoughts for consideration, contemplation, and creation; for reasoning, reflection, and remembrance. Advancing imagination and inventiveness, inspiration and ingenuity, words and language are at the source of conscious thought.

In making sense of people, thoughts, and things or, at minimum, being present to the occurring world, we process and ponder, analyze and rationalize, explain and understand information and intelligence as intellectual, logical thought using words and language. In making sense of emotions, sentiments, passions, fears, and feelings, we use words and language to define, describe, and designate emotional, sensitive thoughts. Besides intellectual and emotional thoughts, we use words and language to identify ways of being, to make sense of attitudes, temperaments, dispositions, and mindsets. What's more, we use words and language to distinguish our standards and principles, ideals and values; we use them to individualize our ethics, integrity, and morality.



Words and language also provide access to perceptions including that which are our assessments, opinions, discernments, and judgements and they provide access to our perspectives, positions, and beliefs as well as our convictions and expectations, our trust and faith, and our spirituality and sense of God.

Two final points regarding words and language in conscious thought; they retrieve the past and they activate the future. Words and language are a means of retaining, recalling, and remembering people, thoughts, and things. Words and language create awareness of that which was previous; they bring alive the past as a conscious thought in the present moment. In contrast, words and language are also a means of creating a future; they bring alive that which can be new, different,

and original; that which can be possible and practical as a conscious thought in the present moment. Words and language create access to imagining, initiating, innovating, and inventing thoughts and things. They are an access to creating and, yes, they are an access to conceiving life. Invention as conscious thought begins with inspiration and imagination. Often, invention begins with seeing or hearing an idea in the mind's eye or ear, that which is subsequently defined and described with words and language. As such, the words and language of invention distinguish concepts and ideas, works and creations, and ultimately development and growth.

Conscious thinking begins in words and language for making sense of intellectual and emotional thoughts, perceptions and beliefs, and attitudes and values as well as inventions and memories. Originating in our thoughts and feelings, conscious thinking provides, as a result, access to our being, speaking, becoming, and doing.

IMPACT ON BEING

Because our innate linguistic capacity has a prodigious impact on conscious thinking, the words and language of thinking have an impact on being. In our normal and natural way of being, we live unconsciously. However, when we think consciously about our way or ways of being, we live consciously. Living in the present moment, living in the here and now, we are consciously aware of life, who we are, and who we are being. Conscious being occurs in conscious thinking; in our thinking, conscious being ensues by purposefully choosing and often creating our ways of being.

Being is distinguished in our individuality and identity, our consciousness and awareness, our authenticity and integrity, and ultimately our behavior and conduct expressed in words and language which characterize our emotions, feelings, beliefs, values, and attitudes in life. What's more, being is also distinguished in two ways: ordinary ways of being and created ways of being.

Ordinary ways of being are the circumstances in which individuals relate to their emotions and feelings based on how they define and describe themselves, in words and language, and how they behave and conduct themselves based on those conversations. Created ways of being are the conditions in which individuals invent possibilities and opportunities, in words and language, based on who they want to be in life and how they want to be enlivened and empowered. With created ways of being, individuals are cause in the matter of their life; with ordinary ways of being, individuals are at the effect of circumstances. Accordingly, created ways of being are thoughtful, conscious behaviors individuals choose that empower them whereas ordinary ways of being are impulsive, unconscious behaviors that disempower individuals.

We access conscious ways of being by choosing words and language that distinguish who we are and who we are being. For example, consider the following words: unstoppable, extraordinary, powerful, free, creative, passionate, and so forth. Now consider the words: despair, vulnerable, hopelessness, powerless, and so forth. Clearly, considering and choosing our words and language in our thoughts are critical to being.

Arising out of our thinking and the choices we make in words and language, our ways of being fabricate a background of who we are and who we are being; our ways of being are context for the conversation called life. And although our awareness and attention in life are usually on our self and our occurring world, its people, circumstances, conditions, events, and environment, it is the background we have caused or created, the background we are at the effect of or empowered by, that is of great consequence because it is, first, a reflection of our thinking and, second, it is our access to speaking, becoming, and doing.

IMPACT ON SPEAKING

The words and language of thinking and the words and language of being conjointly influence speaking; they have an impact on what we say and how we say it. What we say, on the one hand, is influenced by what we think consciously and unconsciously. What we say is guided by our intellectual and emotional thoughts, perceptions and beliefs, attitudes and values; likewise, what we say is also influenced by our memory and imagination. On the other hand, how we say it is influenced by our conscious and unconscious ways of being which are, in turn, exceedingly influenced by our perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings.

Often in speech, we speak automatically, instinctively, unconsciously. We express our self in words and language, we engage in conversation, and we reply, respond, or react to others impulsively; we do this, more often than not, normally and naturally in our conversations without significant consideration or contemplation. Conversely in our speaking from time to time, we also take the time to organize, plan, and develop that which we want to articulate; we intentionally and carefully communicate with others. Accordingly, we speak two distinct ways: unconsciously and consciously. The words and language of conscious thinking and being provide the foundation for purposeful, conscious speaking.

Obviously, our innate linguistic capacity provides us with the ability to speak and it is this ability that arises out of the words and language of being and thinking; out of the words and language of consciousness and contemplation. Words designate that which we sense and perceive, experience and feel, understand and know in life; they give us the ability to define, describe, and designate anything and everything in our occurring world. As such, words are representations, depictions, names, and identities of people and thoughts and things and ways of being. Metaphorically speaking, words are symbolic expressions of consciousness and contemplation so that when we use them in an organized, controlled, and conventional manner, they function as language providing us a means of meaningful expression and exchange, a means of community and communication.

We generally recognize words and language as the principal elements of speaking, conversation, and communication and not the fundamental elements of thinking and being. We can see, however, that without words and language we do not have access to conscious thinking and conscious being and that those words and language of thinking and being directly influence speaking. Moreover, words and language extend beyond conversation, contemplation, and consciousness to provide us additional access to becoming and doing; they provide us an access to making changes, taking actions, and achieving outcomes in life.

IMPACT ON BECOMING

Becoming is about individual improvement, development, and achievement in life; it involves personal creation and expansion as well as progress and growth. Simply stated, becoming is living into the future in the present moment which, moment by moment, slips immediately into the past. We live into the future by being conscientious and responsible in our concerns and obligations and by being intentional in fulfilling on and satisfying our needs, wants, and desires for our fundamental existence and survival. When we are neither responsible nor intentional, we cease to develop and grow both physically and mentally. When we cease to develop and grow, we are figuratively, if not literally, dead.

We are always in a state of becoming whether we cause it or create it, whether we are unconscious or conscious of it. The difference of causing and creating is clear: unconscious thinking, being, and speaking cause a future to merely occur whereas conscious thinking, being, and speaking provide a powerful access to creating an effective future. Either way, our words and language cause or create a future; they instigate or generate an ever-present state of becoming inside of our attention or inattention.

In our conscious thinking, being, and speaking, we use words and language in becoming to fulfill on and satisfy our needs, wants, and desires in life, to enhance our existence and survival. What's more, we use words and language in becoming to create our goals and objectives, to define our responsibilities and obligations, and to

describe our ambitions and aspirations. Plus, we use words and language in becoming to create powerful possibilities and opportunities for our development and growth. Once we have defined, described, and declared our possibilities, we then live into those possibilities in who we are being and becoming, in what we are thinking and speaking, and, as we will discover shortly, in what we are doing. Sadly, when we are not conscious of the power and influence of our words and language, when we do not live into possibility, we simply exist unfulfilled and dissatisfied with life.

In our existence, we usually want or need more or less of things. We want or need more of that which adds to our existence and less of that which detracts from it. Also, we usually want or need that which is better, better than what we have already or better than that which another might have. And, finally, we want or need that which is new and different. New and different reside in change which we tend to resist and yet we welcome change depending on the pleasure or pain, loss or gain, associated with it. Nonetheless, the words and language of needing, wanting, and desiring contribute to becoming. The essence of becoming is invention and declaration of possibilities where possibilities did not exist before; becoming advances who we are and what we want that much further when we live into our possibilities powerfully, intentionally.

Conscious thinking, being, and speaking contribute to the process of development and growth. Becoming arises out of our ways of being and thinking, of living into the future, and out of our inventions and declarations for possibilities. Thinking, being, speaking, and becoming not only require the intentional words and language of becoming but also the words and language of doing.

IMPACT ON DOING

The words and language of thinking, being, speaking, and becoming indisputably have an impact on doing; they influence our ability for accomplishing and achieving ambitions and aspirations, intentions and purposes, goals and objectives, obligations and responsibilities; they influence our ability to fulfill on and satisfy our needs, wants, and desires. Accordingly, doing is concerned with the words and language required for planning and taking actions, for creating agreement and workability, for improving performance and productivity, and for achieving quantitative and qualitative results.

Like speaking, we often do things automatically, instinctively, and unconsciously. Sometimes we speak normally and naturally without much consideration or contemplation; likewise, we take actions normally and naturally without much consideration or contemplation especially if those actions are common, everyday day activities. For other actions, however, whether they are common or somewhat common or rare and infrequent activities in life, we will then take time to plan and organize our efforts so that they are calculated and purposeful.

While taking action is good and most important, actions must produce results. There are either results or reasons for not producing results. Taking action means planning our work and working our plan by taking the right actions for the right results. This is the essence of doing.

Because there are many different activities in life for doing and accomplishing things, there are many different conversations that can be had. Although it is impracticable to summarize them, the following conversations are general, overall examples of the words and language of doing.

First, the words and language for planning usually address resources and participants, methods and processes, scheduling and timing, budgets and expenses as well as the need to manage the activity. Second, the conversations for taking action speak to individual perspectives, perceptions, and preferences regarding the activity and they always involve choices: choosing to take action how, when, and where. Third, the words and language of agreement and workability address the meaning and relevance, benefit and value of the activity and may involve conversations regarding personal belief and trust, reliability and integrity. Fourth, in speaking to performance and productivity, the words and language deal with skills and abilities, comprehension and understanding, best practices and methodologies, consistency and standardization, and so forth. And fifth, the conversations for achieving intended results focus on meeting or exceeding expectations, keeping and honoring our word, delivering valuable quality outcomes, and the need for continuous improvement, if required, for fulfilling on and satisfying needs, wants, and desires.

Words and language provide a powerful access to our thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing. They provide understanding for the features and functions, benefits and value of each distinct conversation and yet, working together within the continuum, the interaction and synergy of those conversations provide even greater understanding for advancing the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of communication to fulfill on and satisfy our needs, wants, and desires.

BENEFITS AND VALUE

In summary, the Theory and Practice of the Innate Capacity of Communication distinguishes the scope and volume, competence and ability we hold with words and language in the continuum of thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing. The overall intention of this theory is to understand the function and value of words and language in our internal and external communications so that we can meet or exceed our expectations for our wants and needs in life. Established in the continuum, we recognize the extent and comprehensiveness of words and language in all areas of existence.

Beginning with their greatest impact in life, words and language access and retrieve thinking; they represent thoughts and things in our contemplation and consciousness. While we usually think unconsciously, we think consciously when we think about thinking. As such, conscious thinking occurs after unconscious thinking as a way of making sense of what we have thought. Words and language name that which we perceive, experience, understand, and know in life giving us the ability to define, describe, and designate anything and everything.

Conscious thought can be arranged in eight fields: first, logic and reason or *intellectual thinking*; second, feelings, fears, and sentiments or *emotional thinking*; third, assessments, opinions, and judgements or *perceptual thinking*; fourth, faith, spirituality, and devoutness or *belief thinking*; fifth, temperaments, dispositions, and mindsets or *attitude thinking*; sixth, principles, ethics, integrity, and morality or *values thinking*; seventh, retaining, recalling, and remembering or *memory thinking*; and eighth, innovating, inventing, conceiving, and creating or *imaginative thinking*.

Conscious thinking creates access to conscious being. In our normal and natural ways of being, we live unconsciously; however, thinking about our ways of being, we live consciously. We distinguish being as ordinary ways of being which occur when an individual is at the effect of their circumstances in contrast to created ways

of being which occur when an individual is cause in the matter of their life. Individuals invent possibilities and opportunities for themselves and their lives, in created ways of being.

Conscious thinking and being create access to conscious speaking. Words and language are powerful in life; they create meaning and they generate a future. Words and language occur only in the present however. Once spoken and heard, seen and read, communication disappears; it evaporates the moment it occurs until the next moment it is spoken and heard, seen and read. Accordingly, we experience words and language *only* in the present. This is not to suggest that we cannot retain and recall past communication, we can relive and remember it but past communication can only be relived and remembered in the present. And this is also not to suggest that we cannot communicate in the future. We can arrange and prepare words and language for future delivery but we can only arrange and prepare in the present. Moreover, we can speak and hear, see and read communication in the future but only in the present moment when we experience it in the future.

The words and language of speaking and the words and language of thinking and being occur only in the present and vanish thereafter. Accordingly, the words and language of speaking provide significant if not vital access to thinking and being in the present moment and essential access to becoming and doing in future moments. The words and language of speaking are central in the continuum of thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing literally and figuratively (see the diagram on page 3).

Conscious thinking, being, and speaking create access to conscious becoming. Without becoming, there is no development and growth. Conscious becoming is about individual expansion, performance, improvement, and accomplishment; it distinguishes our creativity, productivity, progress, and personal growth. Conscious becoming is essential for our survival by fulfilling on and satisfying our needs, wants, and desires. Whether we cause it or create it, we are always in a state of becoming. We unconsciously cause conditions and circumstances in our occurring world when we are not aware and present to our thinking, being, and speaking. Conversely, we consciously create a powerful, purposeful future when we are aware and present to our words and language.

Conscious thinking, being, speaking, and becoming create access to conscious doing. Conscious doing is about survival, about satisfying our needs, wants, and desires. We do that, first, by creating internal conversations in our thinking and being about who we are and what we want and, second, we do that by creating external conversations in our speaking and becoming. Finally, we fulfill on and satisfy our wants and needs by making powerful choices and taking actions. The words and language of doing influences our ability to accomplish and achieve our ambitions and aspirations, intentions and purposes, goals and objectives, obligations and responsibilities. We use words and language to plan, choose, and take actions so that we can produce results.

The words and language of conscious thinking create an access to being; the words and language of conscious being create an access to speaking; the words and language of conscious speaking create an access to becoming; the words and language of conscious becoming create an access to doing; and the words and language of conscious doing create an access to accomplishment and achievement, to realizing our potential, productivity, performance, and the results we can create in life. Effective and efficient communication makes this available in the continuum of thinking, being, speaking, becoming, and doing.

OVERVIEW MAP

Theory and Practice of the Innate Capacity of Communication

1. Thinking

Conscious and Unconscious Thinking

- A. Intellect
 - Reason, Logic, Knowledge, and Understanding
- B. Emotions
 - Feelings, Sentiments, Passions, and Fears
- C. Perceptions
 - Assessments, Opinions, Judgements, and Viewpoints
- D. Beliefs
 - Faith, Spirituality, Devoutness, and Convictions
- E. Attitudes
 - Temperaments, Dispositions, Postures, and Mindsets
- F. Values
 - Principles, Ideals, Integrity, Ethics, and Morality
- G. Memory
 - Retention, Recall, Reminiscence, and Remembrance
- H. Imagination
 - Ideas, Innovations, Inventions, and Creations

2. Being

Conscious and Unconscious Being

- A. Ordinary Ways of Being
 - Individuals Endure Conditions and Situations
 - They Are Being at the Effect of Circumstances
- B. Created Ways of Being
 - Individuals Invent Possibilities and Opportunities
 - They Are Being Cause in the Matter of Life

3. Speaking

Conscious and Unconscious Speaking

- A. Words
 - Words Are Signs and Symbols that Represent Ideas
 - Metaphoric Expression
 - Words Define, Describe, and Designate
 - People, Thoughts, and Things
- B. Language
 - Words Assembled, Organized, and Controlled
 - Means of Meaningful Expression and Exchange

C. Expression and Exchange

We Communicate that Which We:

- Sense and Perceive
- Experience and Feel
- Understand and Know
- Believe and Value
- Remember and Imagine

D. Presence of Words and Language

All Communications Past, Present, or Future Occur Only in the Present

- Past Communications Can Only Be Recalled and Experienced in the Present
- Future Communications Can Only Be Heard and Seen in the Present

All Future Communications Can Only Be Prepared and Delivered in the Present

Words and Language Disappear from the Present:

- Once Spoken and Heard or Seen and Read
- Words and Language Fall Immediately into the Past

4. Becoming

Conscious and Unconscious Becoming

A. Becoming Is Improvement, Development, Performance, and Achievement

Involves Creativity, Productivity, Progress, and Growth

B. Becoming Works for

Our Fundamental Existence and Survival

Fulfillment and Satisfaction of Our Needs, Wants, and Desires

C. We Are Always in a State of Becoming

Unconscious Becoming Causes Circumstances and Conditions

Conscious Becoming Creates a Powerful, Purposeful Future

5. Doing

Conscious and Unconscious Doing

A. Accomplishing and Achieving

Ambitions and Aspirations, Intentions and Purposes

Goals and Objectives, Obligations and Responsibilities

B. Actively Create Internal Conversations in Thinking and Being

Who We Are and What We Want

C. Actively Create External Conversations in Speaking and Becoming

Generate Possibilities and Opportunities

D. Make Choices and Take Actions

Plan Our Work and Work Our Plan

Right Actions Produce the Right Results