

# Communicating effectively with our children

A four week online course

Week 1

# Introduction

- Housekeeping
- Brief review of what we have covered in past courses
- The purpose of this course
- Agenda for the four weeks

# Agenda Week 1

- What is communication
- Goals of communication
- Why learn to communicate effectively?
- Results of poor communication
- Recognizing effective communication
- Learning to listen
  - Intent vs impact
  - Filters

# Agenda Week 2

- Learning to talk differently
- Setting the environment
- Building rapport – the art of validation and paraphrasing
- Junk praise versus effective praise
- Expressing concerns
- Keeping the door open

# Agenda Week 3

- Specific skills
- Managing meltdowns - Helping children deal with their feelings
- Encouraging decision making – giving age appropriate choices
- Engaging their cooperation and building responsibility
- Using language to encourage self discipline and emotional regulation
- Encouraging children to be more independent

# Agenda Week 4

- Talking about values
- When should children speak up?
- The Birds and the bees and other awkward subjects
- Questions and feedback

# Today inshallah

- What is communication
- Goals of communication
- Why learn to communicate effectively?
- Results of poor communication
- Recognizing effective communication
- Learning to listen
  - Intent vs impact
  - Filters

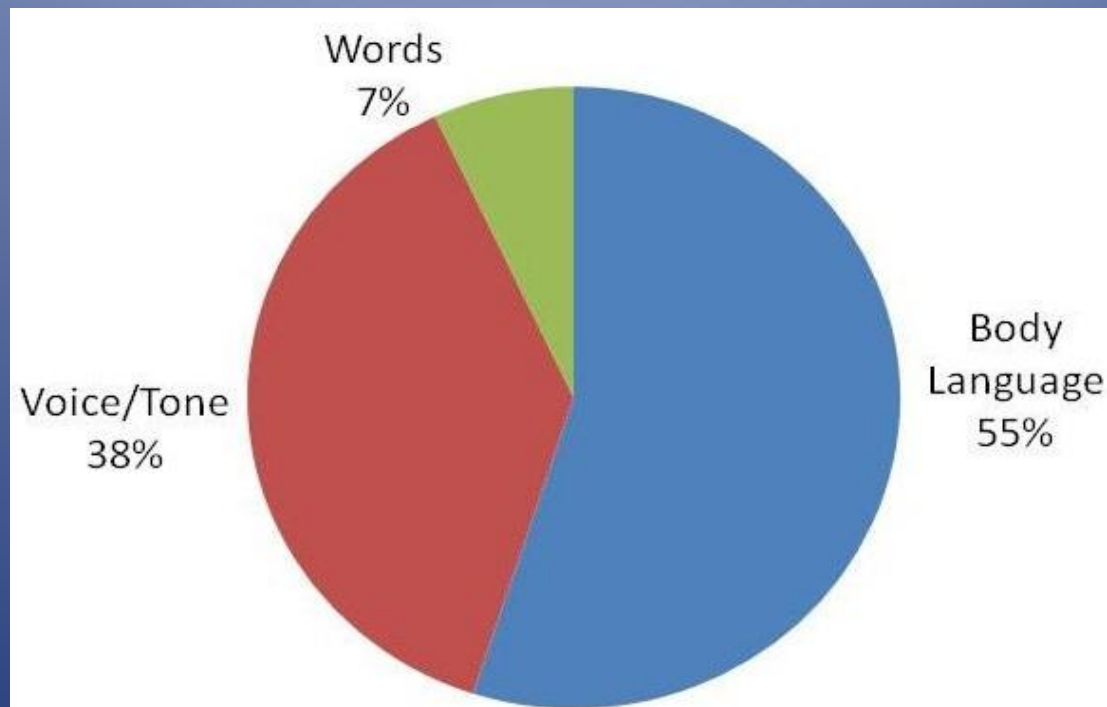
# What is Communication

- ❖ The activity of transmitting verbal and non-verbal information
- ❖ Process by which information and feelings are shared by people through an exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages
- ❖ Any act by information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge or emotions. It may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or non linguistic forms, may occur through spoken which one person gives or receives from another person or other modes.



## VERBAL AND NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- 53% of communication is through body language
- 40% is through tone and feeling
- 7% is through words



So we communicate with  
everything that we say and do  
One more reason why modeling is  
so important

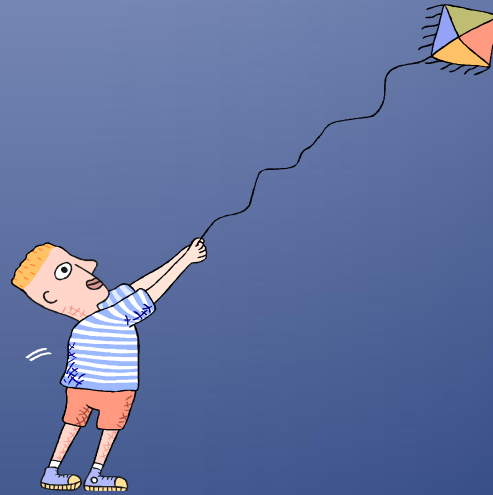
Imam Ali (as)

*“When the talking tongue is silent on sermonizing and the actions of the sermonizer speak for themselves, then no ears can keep the sermon out and nothing is more effectively beneficial than this.”*

Ghurar al-Hikam, Page 232

*“What you do speaks so loudly that I  
cannot hear what you are saying”*

*Emerson*





# Words of Wisdom

*“Do not worry that your children do not listen to what you say. Worry that they watch everything that you do”.*

Everything you say  
and do makes a  
difference.

What message are  
you sending?

# Is your communication congruent?



# Goals of communication

- Relay information
- Gather information
- Foster understanding
- Helping and Caring
- Improve the relationship



# Goals of communication (contd)

- To understand and be understood by loved ones
- To stand up for self
- To be able to express concerns
- To build a healthy and strong family
- To teach children values and influence them

# The importance of effective communication

- The way parents communicate is critical to the development of
- Self esteem
- Emotional health
- Decision making ability  
in children

# The longer term outcome of poor communication in families

- a feeling of continuous frustration over unclear expectations and unmet needs
- judgment
- blaming and accusing
- rudeness
- poor relationships
- sadness, loneliness
- anger
- crying
- doors slamming
- a feeling of me against you as opposed to a team

# Recognizing Ineffective Communication

# Does this sound familiar?

- "How did you sleep?" ("Fine...")  
"How was your day?" ("Fine...")  
"Where are you going?" ("Outside...")  
"When will you be back?" ("Later.")  
"What did you do at school today?" ("Nothing.")  
"Did you finish your homework?" ("I didn't have any.")  
"Stop that!" ("But she started it!")  
"How many times have I told you..." ("Oh, Mom!")

# Discussion

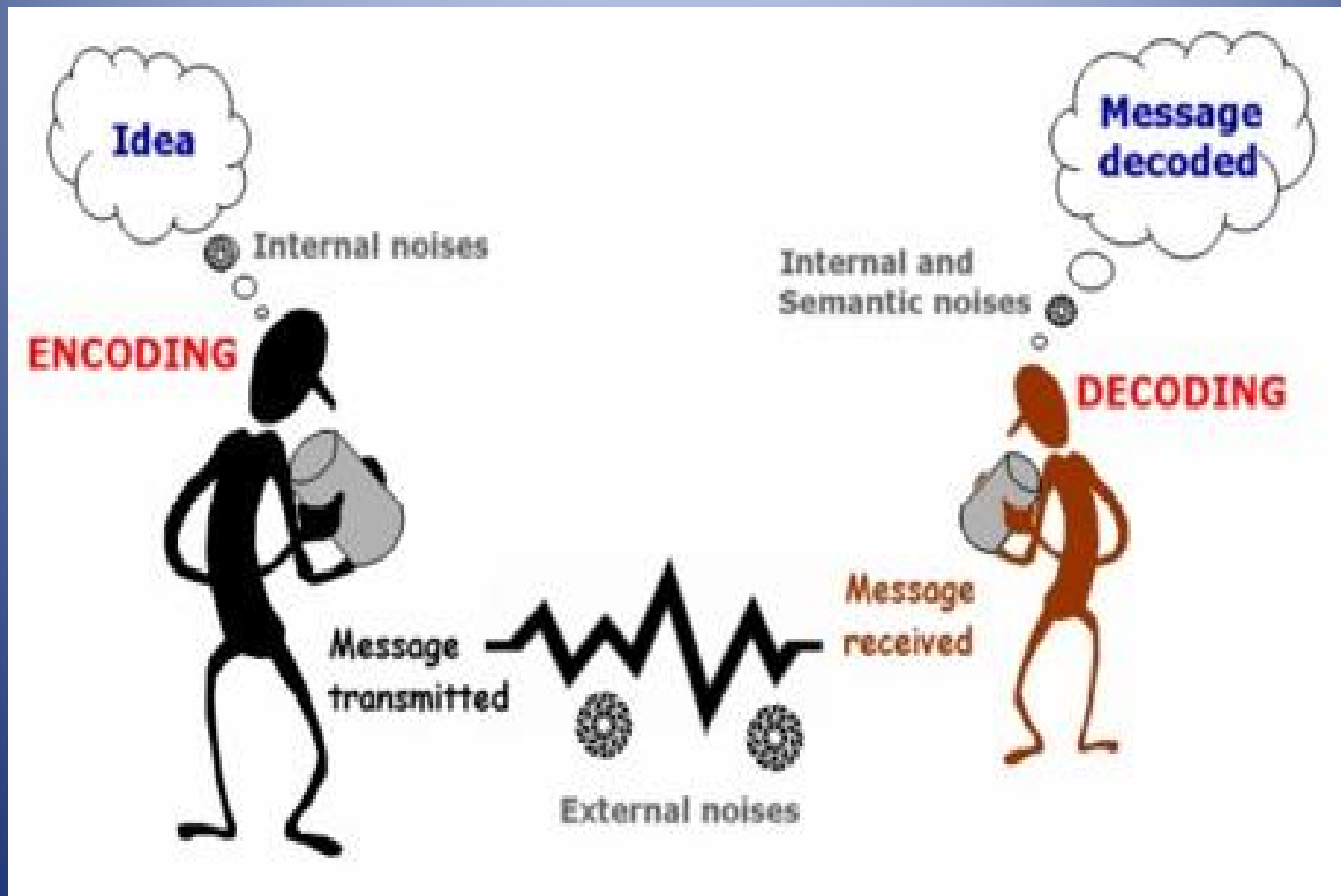
- What does effective communication look like?
- How would you know that you are communicating effectively?

## Intent vs. impact

Intent is message intended by speaker

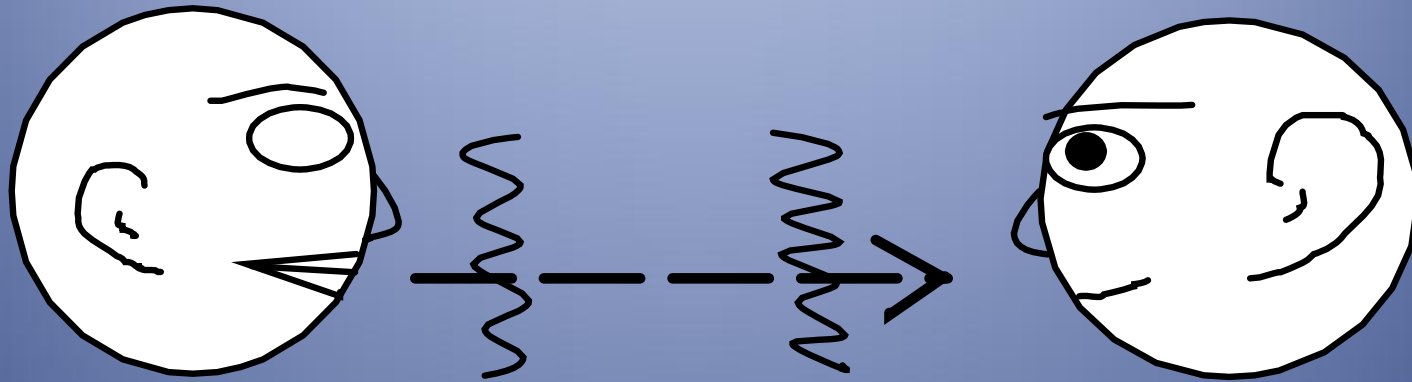
Impact is message received by listener

Accurate communication is when impact equals intent





# Intent and Impact of Communication



- Inattention
- Emotional States
- Negative interpretations
- Beliefs and Expectations
- Style Differences
- Self-Protection

# Dealing with filters

- Recognize
- Take responsibility
- Announce
- Don't memory match
- Give benefit of doubt
- Practice being present

# Learning the skills

## Part 1

### Learning to listen

# How do we listen?

# Some ways of ineffective listening

- ignoring
- do pretend listening
- do selective listening (only to what suits us)
- do attentive listening (to compare with our experience)

# Self Test on listening

- Do I give my children the impression that I'm interested and willing to hear what they have to say?
- Do I put work aside when listening to my children?
- Do I look at my children when they talk to me?
- Does my body language show that I'm paying attention?
- Do my responses show that I have been listening carefully?
- Do I give all my children equal attention when they're talking to me?
- Do I avoid interrupting my children?
- 
- Key: Seven "yes" answers indicate that you listen well.
- "No" answers may indicate some areas for improvement.

Most people listen with the intention to reply, not with the intention to understand.

Our goal for effective communication is to learn to listen to understand.

# Some general points on listening

- Be interested and attentive – model good listening skills
- Only ask questions if you are interested in the answer
- Ask relevant questions to encourage talking– not dead ones
- Listen patiently – people think faster than they speak. Children often take longer than adults to find the right word. Listen as though you have plenty of time.
- Diagnose before you prescribe
- Mirror back or paraphrase what you hear.
- Focus on the Speaker's message. Don't rebut.
- Do not add new information while you are paraphrasing – including body and eye language



## Some general points on listening (contd.)

- Keep a 'talk fast' occasionally
- 'Listen' to nonverbal clues
- Remember that listening does not mean agreeing
- Don't advise or evaluate (agree/disagree)
- Don't be tempted to add your own story
- Don't interpret motive or behavior

# Homework!

- Choose two or three tips from our discussion today and practice them for the next week
- Be ready to share your experience with listening in this way
- What went well? What did you notice?
- What was the biggest challenge?

# Questions and comments?

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