

ALI 340: Elements of Effective Communication

Session Four

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ اللِّسَانِ فَأِكْرَامُهُ عَنِ الْخَنِيِّ وَتَعْوِيدُهُ الْخَيْرِ
وَ تَرْكُ الْفُضُولِ الَّتِي لَا فَايِدَةَ لَهَا وَ الْبِرُّ بِالنَّاسِ
وَ حُسْنُ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِمْ

The right of the tongue is that you consider it too noble for obscenity, accustom it to good, refrain from any vain talk in which there is no benefit, express kindness to the people, and speak well concerning them

Imam Zaynul Abidin (a)Risalatul Huquq

Agenda

- The Holy Quran
- Non verbal communication
- Types of non verbal communication
- Functions of non verbal communication
- Examples from the Holy Quran

The Holy Quran

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ
فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ

O mankind! there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the chests and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.
Say: By the grace of Allah and in His mercy-- in that they should rejoice; it is better than that which they gather.

Sura Yunus, 10:57-58

Non Verbal Communication

A substantial part of communication is non verbal. The human body uses a natural, unconscious way of communicating. It is often more important than the words used. Non verbal communication is subtle and can be culture specific.

The message sent is received in the context in which it is sent. When the non verbal transmitters differ from the verbal transmitters the listener receives the message more from the former.

Being alert to non verbal cues helps the listener understand the actual message and respond accordingly.

Non verbal transmitters can only conform to the verbal transmitters when there is sincerity and purity in the heart.

From Imam Ali (a)

مَا أَضْمَرَ أَحَدٌ شَيْئاً إِلَّا ظَهَرَ
فِي فَلَتَاتِ لِسَانِهِ وَ صَفَحَاتِ وَجْهِهِ

Whenever a person conceals a thing in his heart
it manifests itself
through unintentional words from his tongue
and the expressions of his face

Nahjul Balagha, Hadith no.26

Types of non verbal transmitters

- 1) Facial – smiling, frowning, glaring, emotional expressions, expressionless face . . .
- 2) Voice – loudness, softness, whispering, trembling, enthusiastic, cold . . .
- 3) Gestures – waving, pointing, rolling the eyes . . .
- 4) Posture – arms crossing,
- 5) Eyes – warmth, love, anger, disapproval, hatred . . .
- 6) Distance
- 7) Touch
- 8) Silence

Functions of non verbal communication

- 1) Repeats and emphasizes the message. Non verbal communication reinforces verbal communication.
- 2) Complements and accentuates the message
- 3) Substitutes for words. Sometimes what is difficult for the speaker to convey with words is done through the body.
- 4) Can contradict the message. Non verbal cues sometimes negate the words spoken.
- 5) Reveals the sincerity or lack of it in the speaker.

Examples from the Quran

Facial – Smiling

فَتَبَسَّمْ ضَاحِكًا مِّنْ قَوْلِهَا

So he smiled, wondering at her speech

Sura an-Naml, 27:19

Facial – Laughing

وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ قَائِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَاَهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ
قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَىٰ أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا ۖ
إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ

And his wife standing by, laughed
as We gave her the good news of Ishaq
and after Ishaq of (a grandson) Yaqub
She said: O my! shall I, an old woman, bear a child
and this my husband is an old man?
That is indeed a strange thing.

Sura Hud, 11:71

Facial – Winking

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ
وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ

Surely they who are guilty
used to laugh at those who believe.
And when they passed by them,
they winked at one another

Sura al-Mutaffifin, 83:29-30

Facial – Weeping

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ
الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ
الشَّاهِدِينَ

And when they hear what has been revealed to the messenger you will see their eyes overflowing with tears on account of the truth that they recognize; they say: Our Lord! we believe, so write us down with the witnesses (of truth).

Sura Maidah, 5:83

Gestures – hanging the head in shame

ثُمَّ نَكِسُوا عَلَى رُؤُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْطِقُونَ

Then they were made to hang down their heads:
Certainly you know that they do not speak.

Sura Anbiya, 21:65

Eyes – Fear

فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَالَّذِي
يُغْشَى عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۖ فَإِذَا ذَهَبَ الْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوكُمْ بِالْأَسِنَّةِ
حِدَادٍ

but when fear comes, you will see them looking to
you, their eyes rolling like one swooning because
of death; but when the fear is gone they smite you
with sharp tongues

Sura al-Ahzab, 33:19

Eyes – Jealousy

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُزِلُّوكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ
وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ

And those who disbelieve would almost smite you with their eyes when they hear the reminder, and they say: Most surely he is mad

Sura al-Qalam, 68:51

Effect of non verbal cues

Cheerfulness removes the grudges of others

Holy Prophet (s), Mizanul Hikmah, H#1706

The cause of love is cheerfulness

Imam Ali (a), Mizanul Hikmah, H#1719

You cannot help [all of] mankind with your wealth
so meet them with cheerful faces and joy.

Holy Prophet (s), Mizanul Hikmah, H#1724



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