

Pondering Point

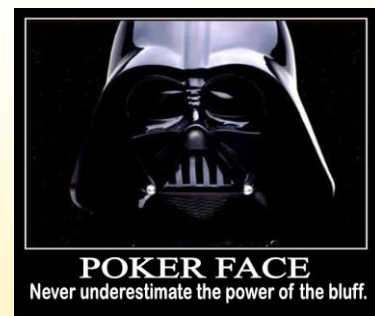
Many of us have heard the old adage “honesty is the best policy” and at first glance we could all agree with that statement. If we stop to think about it, is it ever dangerous to tell the whole truth? What happens when people are too honest? How does that make us feel? Assertive communication is about knowing what we want to say and how to communicate that to others. Are we being assertive if we fail to be totally honest? What is the right balance of being honest and respectful of another’s feelings? What role does tact play in being honest with people? **Knowing how to deliver the truth in a tactful way may make the difference between being constructive and destructive.**

It may not be as simple as being *dishonest*. It may be that we say too much. Do we need to say everything on our mind? It may be more about HOW we say something than what we say. We may not realize that we are coming across as brutal. Are we taking a moment to think about how our message will be received? We cannot control the receiver of the message and they may not be able to hear the message the way we intended. Allowing ourselves the freedom to be honest with others and get our point across is a sign of self-respect. We can celebrate that people are hearing what we have to say.

What is the dark side of HONESTY?

Is honesty always the best policy if it can be brutal?

Where is the “sweet spot” to deliver your message?



Imagine... getting a better night’s sleep knowing how to be honest with yourself and others.

— From Pondering to Practice —

Activity:

Try This - Select one (or more) of the quotes below and discuss what it means to you with a partner or as a group.

- Each time someone shares, have another person repeat back what they heard to ensure the message was heard the way it was intended.

- “Tell me what you heard so I can see what you thought I said.”

“The highest compact we can make with our fellow is - Let there be truth between us two forevermore.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Who lies for you will lie against you.” - Bosnian Proverb

“People who are brutally honest get more satisfaction out of the brutality than out of the honesty.”

- Richard J. Needham

“A half-truth is a whole lie.” - Yiddish Proverb

Reflection:

- What is the benefit/purpose to stopping to pause and think before we speak?

- Is it necessary and is it constructive?

- What can you do to maintain your own sense of self when you feel depleted by another’s honesty?

- What is the difference between being blunt and being straightforward?

- We may be brutally honest with ourselves at times. Are you ever too brutal and can that break you down?