

What Are You Selling?

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This is an excerpt from the book “Anatomy of Upset; Restoring Harmony” by Behnam Bakhshandeh

Every day in our lives we are selling our stories to people, either we are selling our power, our intentions, our greatness, our commitment and vision; or we are selling our smallness, our pain, our suffering, our stories, and our drama. I am sure you have noticed that at parties or gatherings most of conversations are about pain, suffering, upset and drama. Have you watched TV lately? It is full of drama and suffering, fights and backstabbing movies, reality shows or sitcoms. TV executives and marketing companies are aware and know that we, as people, will connect to the stories, because we can relate to the dramas they are showing. What then? Here comes advertising and marketing. Now they have us exactly where they want us!

We cannot avoid upset for the most part. Upsetting situations blindside us for many years. They influence very important aspects of our lives, such as our relationships to our family and friends, at home as well as in work. Some upsets can be avoided by steering clear of certain people, particular situations or expectations, but that is rare. What about the rest of our lives?

As I mentioned, upset is part of our day-to-day living. Unfortunately for some people it becomes who they are, so that they just wake up to upset “by default” every day. They do not even notice that they wake up upset; they just wake up with it and drag it through their day. They wonder why people are leaving them, or why they are not coming around. They are so in it, they cannot even hear themselves complaining and calling everyone and everything wrong. They just become miserable and lonely.

Conversation ABOUT Something, or FOR something

It is not possible to live a life without upset, but it is possible to build mastery around knowing how and when we get upset, what causes us to get upset and what we are able to do to overcome uncomfortable and upsetting situations. We can have conversation about our upsets in two completely different ways. We can have a conversation ABOUT something or we can have conversation FOR something. Conversation about something; is to just talk about all the reasons

and explanations of why we are upset, who upsets us, why they are not fair to us, etc. Conversation for something; is to talk about our responsibility for causing upsets, our part in our expectations, and unrealistic desires from others. It is about being accountable for what we have made up out of our experiences in life, the unrealistic stories we have made up to cover our own lack of responsibility to live our lives without pain, suffering, stories and drama.

As I always say to my clients, “Life, by itself, will bring you lots of pain and suffering without your own personal contribution to it! You should pay attention to bringing some fun, joy and play to it.” So, which direction are we taking? On which road are we traveling? Are we ABOUT something or FOR something?

Power of Words

Our environment is the product of what we say. We are adding words to our daily dialogues that set the stage for our upsets. We use disempowering words that have a negative impact on our experience of life. We say things as if they are simple truth, like “It is a bad day”, or even “It is a good day”, which one is the truth? Neither one, we just made up both sentences. Let’s look, which one is empowering? Which one is moving us forward in the direction of our commitments to have peaceful and serene lives?

We are the ones who declare our intentions when we speak. We are the ones who declare good or bad, right or wrong, true or false in our world, in our own experience of the world around us. We need to pay attention to what we are creating: in our mind, in our speaking and in our reactions to others around us. If we are committed to create peace of mind, we have to start with ourselves and then go out and express it to others. You are building your life - daily, hourly, moment-by-moment - through your thoughts. With them, you are molding your future.

If we are committed to resolving our upsetting situations, we must start thinking and speaking FOR it, not just talking ABOUT it. “Talking about” it is just nagging and complaining, mostly in the form of gossip, irresponsible speaking, or victimizing scenarios. Contrast this with “talking for” it, which is speaking responsibly, holding ourselves to account for our share of upset, and speaking with the intent of commitment to resolution, not fighting and creating more upset.

“A system of morality, which is based on relative emotional values, is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception that has nothing sound in it and nothing true.”

--Socrates