

The things we take for granted

By Diane Hartman

Have you ever had the wrong impression about something or someone? I can see the heads nodding! We all have and will throughout our lifetime, it is just a part of life. We turn on the tap an automatically expect cold or hot water to flow and if cold water comes out of the hot water tap, we react as if there was a grave emergency of sorts, which would paralyze us from washing the dishes or food in cold water. Yikes!! Be forewarned that if you have an upcoming MRI appointment, do not read any further!

A few days ago I had to get an MRI done – I'm all good; thank God, but as I prepared myself mentally for this experience I recall seeing this machine on TV and on the internet and it appears as spacious and quite comfortable. I thought the experience would be like taking a ride in a space ship that never leaves the ground. Recall the saying "things are never what they appear to be"? I arrived and was given a beauty of a two-piece golden brown garment to wear and was lead into the MRI room. Upon seeing the machine I thought I was really going to go for a nice ride – it was

cool; that is until I looked closer and realized that the size of the hole that I was going to be fitted into was well, not at all spacious. The cute MRI operator told me that this was going to be the most peaceful 30 min I'll have all day. He even offered me my choice of music so I donned my headset and settled in for a peaceful aha moment. Then a beeper to hold in case I needed to use it! And that was after I was strapped in! Red flag! Reality quickly set in when I realized that there was no room to move, especially when I was told to lie still for 30 whole min. Are you crazy? Cutie left the room and the table I was lying on moved into the body tight tunnel – I could hear the operator's voice "are you OK" Ah, will this table slide in any further?" No! Liar, liar pants on fire!! Bottom line is – I didn't realized how claustrophobic I was until that moment, and how much I enjoy movement, space and the wonderful ability to move my limbs which I didn't really understood until the journey into the MRI machine. So take a moment and regardless of how tired your lovely limbs are; be thankful for the freedom to move!

Colour Coded for Success

Word-Free Communication Tool Kit By Helena Kaufman

Humans desire communication. Lack of a common language, shyness or the opportunity to speak out loud does not prevent the constant transmission of messages. In situations where one is not able to use a common language while traveling or transacting business, awareness of non-verbal messages is useful. Here are a few of our tools for interpersonal communication without words:

Face. In North America we expect direct eye contact. It establishes a sense of trust and we feel we can detect untruths or lack of sincerity because we believe the face reveals what is really being said. What needs to be considered are colleagues for whom direct eye contact is not culturally comfortable or sometimes permitted. Also, facial muscles tell their own story. The face and eyes should match each other as well as the message, or may be thought that all are not on the same 'page of intent'. The message may be suspect.

Voice is also a key

component. Does the tone convey interest, attention, sincerity or other emotions? An unnaturally high voice or one that quavers or cracks, no eye contact, and no matching face do not support confidence in a person's message.

Speed of speech, should be adjusted to convey a focus and attention on the person being spoken to. Clear, unrushed speech allows a person to catch some phrases and shows an interest as well as respect in the effort to communicate a message. The presence of **silence** can speak volumes. Giving a person enough time to formulate a response and express themselves affirms that you are experiencing the other person. New Canadians often say people ask how they are but don't really wait for the answer or appear to really care. In addition they may say "I'm fine" in response to the question but their face in no way says the same. Gestures somehow paint a picture and 'punctuate' the message, the facial expression and the tone you are using to build



rapport.

Rapport is a measure of success in communication. It means you are working for mutual understanding. When you are in rapport each party feels understood or at least experienced by the other. Sometime the parties mirror each other's body language and speech. It feels natural and uncoordinated. And of course, when appropriate, a smile or laughter is the fastest connector between people, especially while you sort out all the other messages. Join us next time when the column deals with the practical approach to maintaining good communication when you must say: NO.

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