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Most of us are taught to pay attention to what is said the words. Words do provide us with some information, but meanings are derived from so many other sources that it would hinder our effectiveness as a partner to a relationship to rely too heavily on words alone. Words are used to describe only a small part of the many ideas we associate with any given message. Sometimes we can gain insight into some of those associations if we listen for more than words. We don't always say what we mean or mean what we say. Sometimes our words don't mean anything except "I'm letting off some steam. I don't really want you to pay close attention to what I'm saying. Just pay attention to what I'm feeling." Mostly we mean several things at once. A person wanting to purchase a house says to the current owner, "This step has to be fixed before I'll buy." The owner says, "It's been like that for years." Actually, the step hasn't been like that for years, but the unspoken message is: "I don't want to fix it. We put up with it. Why can't you?" The search for a more expansive view of meaning can be developed of examining a message in terms of who said it, when it occurred, the related conditions or situation, and how it was said. When a message occurs can also reveal associated meaning. Let us assume two couples do exactly the same amount of kissing and arguing. But one couple

always kisses after an argument and the other couple always argues after a kiss. The ordering of the behaviors may mean a great deal more than the frequency of the behavior. A friend's unusually docile behavior may only be understood by noting that it was preceded by situations that required an abnormal amount of assertiveness. Some responses may be directly linked to a developing pattern of responses and defy logic. For example, a person who says "No!" to a series of charges like "You're dumb," "You're lazy," and "You're dishonest," may also say "No!" and try to justify his or her response if the next statement is "And you're good looking." We would do well to listen for how messages are presented. The words, "I sure has been nice to have you over," can be said with emphasis and excitement or ritualistically. The phrase can be said once or repeated several times. And the meanings we associate with the phrase will change accordingly. Sometimes if we say something infrequently it assumes more importance. sometimes the more we say something the less importance it assumes.

1. Effective communication is rendered possible between two conversing partners, if ____.

A. they use proper words to carry their ideas. B. they both speak truly of their own feelings. C. they try to understand each other's ideas beyond words. D. they are capable of associating meaning with their words.

2. "I'm letting off some steam" in paragraph 1 means ____.

A. I'm just calling your attention. B. I'm just kidding. C. I'm just saying the opposite. D. I'm just giving off some sound.

3. The house-owner's example shows that he actually means ____.

A. the step has been like that for

years. B.he doesn ' t think it necessary to fix the step. C.the condition of the step is only a minor fault. D.the cost involved in the fixing should be shared. 4.Some responses and behaviors may appear very illogical, but are justifiable if____. A.linked to an abnormal amount of assertiveness. B.seen as one ' s habitual pattern of behavior. C.taken as part of an ordering sequence. D.expressed to a series of charges. 5.The word “ ritualistically ” in the last paragraph equals something done____. A.without true intention. B.light-heartedly. C.in a way of ceremony. D.with less emphasis.

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