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The Uses of Communication

Mayan Revelation Number 244

Self-Expression

What We Say

What You Write

What You Do

Your Face

Your Presence

Your Life

Beloved Perfector:

This lesson has to do with the many means of expressing oneself. Briefly, by way of introduction to this lesson, let us talk for a moment about the power of words.

Recently, in our community, a young man, who was unhappy over his wife's decision to divorce him, climbed to the top of a very high building and stood there declaring his intention to jump off the building - to commit suicide. He stayed there for five hours - and various people went up and talked to him in an effort to make him change his mind. At the end of the five hours, one man said the words that caused the young man to come down from the high building. Just what those words were, no one knows, but whatever they were, they were powerful, for they caused the man to change his mind as to what he was about to do - they saved his life.

Words have the power to destroy and they also have the power to lift us from the depths of despair to the heights. Our words are so important that we should use great care before speaking. A minister can save a soul by some well-chosen words that touch a responsive chord in the heart of a sinner. Words spoken by a sweetheart, or a husband, or a wife, can break the heart of the one to whom those words are spoken. We should be as careful of our words as we are of our actions - we should be as careful not to speak ill as we are careful not to do ill to anyone.

The reason the leaders of great countries have meetings is not so much to make decisions as to try to evaluate each other from the words that are spoken. Each man endeavors to take a measure of the other through his words. A sentence has decided the fate of many a friendship, and probably the fate of many a nation.

Oh, yes, words are one of our most important means of expression. Kind words are really blessings to those who receive them. They are blessings to the one who speaks them and to the recipient. Soft words said to an angry person

can completely change the situation and bring tranquility out of chaos, whereas harsh words would only add fuel to the fire. A very small child knows by the **tone** we take when we speak to him whether we are pleased or displeased with him.

Always remember that it is difficult to recall a hasty word. You can take a blemish from a diamond by polishing it, but unkind words once spoken are difficult to recall. All the apologies and all the remorse you may feel can seldom erase the hurt you have inflicted by the words spoken in thoughtlessness or in anger.

Think again on the power of words - when you think of a beautiful song, or a well-written book, or poetry that moves you deeply because of its words.

Ah, yes, words are a vast force for good or evil. Make sure that the words you use in expressing yourself are always something of which you can be proud and never ashamed. Weigh your words carefully before you speak - be sure of their impact - that they may be always for good and never for evil.

And let us not overlook the educator - the teacher - the professor - who with words develops our great scientists, our great physicians, our great ministers, our great engineers, all of the great professions that have arrived at this stature of greatness through words that someone spoke.

In the lesson which is to follow, we have covered other ways of communication. Study them well and be sure that you are using your God-given powers for good, always remembering that as a member of The Mayan Order, you have set out to improve yourself and your way of life, and that you are accomplishing what you have set out to do.

Pray for enlightenment with the following words, and then proceed to learn more about expression.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for the ability to exchange the expression of thought with others and with Thee. Help me to use it to Thy honor. Amen.

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Self-Expression

All animate beings, in some manner and measure, amplify their existence by expressing themselves. Even animals do so in sounds, inflections, signs, looks, and actions. How well, for instance, our household pets manage to make themselves understood. For instance, go into a herd of deer with food and you will find their self-expression very definite - first with pleading eyes, then with nudging noses, then by somewhat more positive means if necessary.

Man, of course expresses himself best of all because he not only has more adaptable vocal powers and more knowledge of how to use them, but also because he

has a number of very effective additional ones. The chief of these we shall explore somewhat in the course of this lesson. One can go through life using the various forms of this wonderful gift without stopping to realize what a blessing it is. Suppose we were deprived of it for awhile. We should then understand how much it means that it has been given us. The only charge for it, if there is one, is to use it rightly.

No matter what you do or how, as you go about the business of living your life, you almost constantly multiply yourself through various forms of self-expression. This opens up your inner life, so that those you meet not only see you as you look, but as you are. Wherever you come and whenever you go, it makes a difference. People who meet you realize that you have left a little of yourself with them in what you have expressed, and you realize that they have done the same with you. This fact has a great meaning for us all. That is a perfectly wonderful fact. Think about it, and you will want to give special thanks for it.

This is even true when we pass out of the world. Something of us remains behind with those we leave and those who come after us. Here, then, is another wonderful thing about the power of self-expression. It is more permanent than is our physical living presence. We write accounts of ourselves in conditions, in memory, and even in the lives of others. The world cannot easily forget us, nor quickly. That should be a sobering thought.

We need to remember that, like ancient cave artists and inscription carvers, we are leaving something all along the way for coming generations to see and know. In the Roman catacombs, one finds repeatedly pictures of fish on the walls that sheltered early Christians until they died. The letters of the Greek word for fish are the initials of the Greek words for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour". The picture of a fish was their secret symbol by which they recognized each other among hostile strangers, and after two thousand years remains their silent testimony to ages that must not forget.

Our lives send out meanings to others, the echoes of which will still sound after we have left the spot. It seems worthwhile, then, that we should consider this diverse aura of meaning we give off, in the hope of making it as beautiful and helpful as we can.

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What We Say

When we think of expression, we naturally think first of Speech. Although it is only one of the many forms of expression, it is the one most easily interpreted and understood. Man early discovered that he had adaptable vocal organs and began fashioning words and combinations of words to play on them like music on an instrument. The world has many languages, but the same general laws of construction run through all of them we know. That enables us to translate words and make them permanent in writing. What a great blessing that is, also!

The Bible has much to say about the tongue and care in the use of it, even cautioning us to remember that it is like a fire which, though small, can kindle

a very great fire. It has probably made more of our history than the sword ever did, and to this day it is saving causes to which marching armies would be inadequate. That is why we keep resorting to diplomacy instead of arms, making violence the last resort in our human misunderstandings.

What blessed things words can be, and what treasured memories they can become! The word of counsel, the word of affection, the word of encouragement, the word of hope, the word of friendly interest, the word of instruction, all become spots of sunshine along the way, and are so remembered throughout life. Each recalls a presence and a voice, and how we miss them after years go by! Spoken words really make up a large and a very treasured part of life. We should remember when we hear them that every year will make them dearer.

Science has now made it true that words can be more than memories after they are spoken. We record them on phonograph records as we record familiar faces by means of the camera. Whether or not that is ever done, however, and it cannot be done with all the words that have meant much to us - they are recorded in memory so truly that even in old age the tones and overtones, with accents and emphases, all remain with us to remember in the silent hours. It will help you to try to say the right thing when you keep in mind that your voice will be remembered too.

"Father used to say", "Mother used to say", "friend used to say", "my teacher used to say" - do we not hear these formulas over and over? That is because they are so much a part of someone's life. Remember that there will be people who will often remark about what you used to say, and people who speak already of what they have heard you say. Realizing all this, make it golden.

The wisest and most careful of us have difficulty with slips of the tongue. We do not mean to make them. We may not even really mean what we say when we make them. They should lead us to consider how much we shall gain by considering carefully what we are about to say before we say it. Then we may say something better.

You can do great and many kinds of good with your tongue. It can get you into trouble, but it need not. Make it your servant, and not your master.

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What You Write

The pen is the servant of the tongue and the perpetuator of its utterances. It sometimes does not do its work well enough, and sometimes not at all; but when it does, it tells us what other minds have thought and other hands have done, and enables us to distinguish the better and the worse for our own benefit and that of the future. The pen preserves a thought for what it was on a given day, as the photograph preserves a face for what it was at a given moment. Thus they, especially the pen, can make a vanished moment immortal.

Everyone who can write is an author, even the one who must make a mark for his signature and the one who lived so long ago that he had to write in pictures. They all became historians, and some of them became philosophers and

teachers. The scraps anyone writes, even as those of the past have done, become records that tell a part of his story. The more informal they are, as in letters, notations, or passing remarks, the more accurate are the stories they tell, because these are records of life as it is lived and thoughts as they occur.

A tablet in California about the long ago visit of Sir Frances Drake, runes discovered in Minnesota that suggest very early visits of Scandinavians, the Rosetta Stone that unlocked mystery languages of the East, the discoveries of ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing, and the recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls - these and countless others like them have opened mysteries of the past, yet they were merely things someone once took a notion to write. We never know how much a few scratches of the pen may mean to the future.

Letters go as our messengers far and near. Well-written letters often convey not only facts and thoughts, but feelings and attitudes, for often much, if not most, of the meaning of any writing is not in the lines but between them. Letters may seem casual and unimportant, yet no one knows how important they may become. You can hardly find a better biography of anyone than his letters, for they are really himself and not someone else's notion of him. Letters even from ancient Greece and Rome are preserved today, and worth it. Letters baked on clay and into baked clay envelopes survive from three and four thousand years ago to tell the stories of people who once lived, breathed, hoped, dreamed, and struggled. Those hopes, dreams, and struggles compose the history of the human race.

Literature is a form of communication that preserves for us the thoughts of great minds and the feelings of great hearts. We say this is the body of the important writings of great people; but to someone, any writing is important and any person is great. There are those to whom anything you write will be more important than any other, because no one occupies a greater place in their lives than you do.

It is a fine thing to be a good penman, but it is far more important to be a good writer. Many people with great souls and some with great minds have not been very good penmen. It may be because to be a good penman one must conform to a fixed style, while the greater mind usually wings its way freely in the universe of truth, and if necessary makes styles of its own. Anyway, never be discouraged because your penmanship is poor. It might even be a good sign. Anything you write is an embalmed thought, feeling, or attitude, so make it worthwhile.

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What You Do

An old adage ran truly, "Actions speak louder than words". Emerson wrote wisely, "What you do speaks so loudly I cannot hear what you say." Action is not vocal, but it is communicative. It does not articulate, but it thunders. A word is the expression of a thought, but an act is the crystallization of one, which is more.

Shakespeare makes Mark Antony say at the funeral of Julius Caesar, "The evil that men do lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones". This statement is partly true and partly not. The evil that a man does lives

after him for awhile, but it finally dies out while the good lives on. You can see this law beginning to operate, when one passes on, in the fact that people struggle for only the good things they can say about him. They are trying to forget the rest. We should try so to live as to make as much as possible of this unnecessary. It is to people's credit, though, that they try to be charitable enough to emphasize what is most worth emphasizing.

There is an immortality of remembrance, by which one's deeds live after him, the bad for awhile and the good forever. It is said that, "Who lives in hearts he leaves behind can never die."

If you are older, you can look about you and see that much, perhaps most, of your personal world and that of others near and far consists of conditions you have created, what your hands have done and your acts have made. Evaluate it every day and see what your life is saying to the world and recording for the future. That is your measure as men will know it, and its making is in your power. You cannot change what has been done, but you can determine what is yet to be done. That may even change what has been done in some degree. All expression can at least be revised.

Never be deluded into thinking that these things apply to the famous and the fortunate but not to you. All truth is applicable to everyone in terms of his own life, needs, abilities, and opportunities. The harvest from your planting might be less than that of someone else, but it might be greater when all things are considered. We never know. The One who gives the increase also makes the estimate. The famous people who have occupied high positions and about whom so much has been said and written have all been subject to the same law and have had their returns measured by the same standards.

There is also an indirect causation that is sometimes credited to us. The world owes many a great person's deeds not so much to him as to someone, perhaps like you, who saved his life, or encouraged him to keep on, or helped him go to school. If even the giver of a cup of cold water does not lose his reward, what about these who have lent a helping hand from the shadows? "We rise by the things that are under our feet, by what we have mastered of good or gain", and we reap what we sow.

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Your Face

This part of the lesson is not a treatise on beauty culture, but it does have something to do with attractiveness. The theme of it is that the human face also is a means of self-expression, often telling more than the voice does about what dwells and is taking place within. Our lives come to register themselves on our faces, and do so as attractively or unattractively as themselves without much regard to what the face is like. We come to look like what we see, think, and do, because we are like what we see, think, and do.

There is a deeper attractiveness that no cosmetician can impart and a deeper unattractiveness that no cosmetician can cover up. We sometimes find the first on faces that would not otherwise be considered beautiful, and we find the second sometimes hiding and spoiling an inheritance of real facial beauty. Those

who used to say that "pretty is as pretty does" really had an idea worth considering. Whether in permanent character or momentary thought, the face will often belie the tongue. The tongue can choose between truth and falsehood, but sensitive features usually cannot. It is not wise to trust too far a face that is bold enough to conceal inner thoughts and feelings.

Almost anyone, if asked to list the beautiful people he has known, would place his mother first on the list. Yet, he is not thinking of conventional beauty, for his mother probably had little time to give attention to it, and many of our mothers had too much of a battle with life in caring for their families not to have its traces on their faces. Love holds lenses of enchantment over our eyes, and makes beautiful whatever they see.

A certain man in a certain town was considered the ugliest citizen in the place. He was a teacher, and students shrank from him on first acquaintance, but soon were so captivated by the beautiful mind and spirit that showed through his inspired teaching that, by the time they had studied under him for awhile, they began to consider him the handsomest man in town. His soul shone through his face.

One of the prophets said of the coming Redeemer, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him there is no beauty that we should desire him". God never meant that physical charm should keep people from seeing the spiritual charm of the Master. He was a plain man, and yet who of us does not think of His pictured face as being that of the most attractive person who ever lived? An actual portrait of Him would have shown once and for all how true it is that one speaks through his face, and truthfully too. No soldier looks very well after a battle, but the cause makes him attractive to the heart of those for whom he fights.

No spiteful, selfish, useless person can really be very handsome. Even if he is at the start, he cannot long remain so. No matter where he goes, to eyes that know how to interpret it, his face tells the truth about him and his thoughts, no matter what he may say about himself or them.

The face, even if battle-scarred and worn in service, is a communication. It is also a history. It can no more conceal its secrets than a letter can conceal what was in the mind of the writer. What have YOU written on YOUR face today?

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Your Presence

Our very presence gives off communicative meaning to people who know how to observe it. It, like everything else, shows how there is nothing that is not a related part of life, the world, the universe, and eternity. The very fact of your living in the world, whether you know about it or do anything about it or not, affects the whole human race and its future history. Whatever you say or do not say, whatever you do or do not do, you are making an impression of yourself on life and people, like pressing a design into wax, and the design is permanent.

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Whatever it is that radiates from us may be an electric force, a mental emanation or brain wave, a subconscious influence, or something else; but whatever it is, it is there. Entering a room changes the situation in that room. Being born changes the situation in the world, and keeps changing it more and more as life advances. We cannot get away from this fact because we cannot get away from ourselves. We are something Destiny writes into the story of the ages. It is very important what we write into the history of mankind, even without being conscious that we are writing anything at all.

It is sometimes a service, and unfortunately it is occasionally a dis-service, just to be somewhere. Votes are sometimes swayed just by the fact that someone is or is not present. If he is present, he may indicate neither by word or act what his position is, but he affects the outcome for good or ill. People may admire him and want to do what they think he would do, or vice versa; but he helps determine something by his very presence.

Emily Dickinson said of her father, "If Father is asleep on the sofa, the house is full". Edward Dickinson was a lawyer in a small town, but he had built a personality that was active even when he was asleep, and his keenly intuitive daughter did not fail to understand it. What was true of him is true in one way or another of us all because personality speaks. Presence communicates.

Living, even being in the world without doing much real living, is no insignificant thing. It makes a difference that we live at a certain address, that we are seen on the street, that neighbors know and strangers hear that we are this kind of people or that. This is a deeper layer of democracy everywhere operative. It requires no speeches, campaigns, and elections. We cast our votes every day just by being here, and we even continue to cast them for a long time after we have gone. There can be no deception about this influence. It comes from the depths of our being, and counts for what it really is.

There is such a thing as a stewardship of presence. It, like possessions and time, is something we are called upon to share. We need some solitude because we have to build some inner life to share with others when we are in the crowd again. There is such a thing as thought transference too. The laboratory has proved that. It is the more active phase of the communication of presence. What a rich thing life is when it radiates so much!

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Your Life In closing, let us note that all these things and probably many more unite in the meanings, messages, and effects, given off by our total lives and our living of them. Like many instruments joining in the rendering of a great symphony or many colors and shades combining into a painting, all these forms of expression become the whole force of a life on all the rest of the lives being lived in the world. Not one of us is missing in this stupendous combination, and not one of its impacts is missing in the lives we live. The life of the world is made of countless units all united in one, all of them expressions.

Wherever you go and whatever you do, even though you may not speak a word, you are addressing those around you, the world, and the ages. Even if you

do speak, other forms of expression in your life may speak louder, and at times they may even dispute it. If a rose could speak, its perfume would always carry more meaning than its voice. If the sun could speak, people would always miss what it is saying when looking at a sunset. Between times, people remember that a rainbow has a meaning; but when it appears, people think of nothing but its glory.

There is a magnetism of the spirit by which you are always drawing people, especially young people and children, toward you, which means that you are carrying them along in the direction in which your life is reaching. This is a sobering fact. It makes daily living a serious matter, and forever denies the claim of anyone that his life is entirely his own affair. It cannot be because it is a form of communication which even the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

Today, at this moment, there are people both near and far away who are what they are, and to whom life means what it does, and do what they do and think what they think, wholly or partly because of what your life and your way of living it have meant to them. At the same time, the sum total of your life includes many factors that have been contributed to it by others in the same way. People who forget this are the first ones to get tangled in the web of experience.

Do you not, now and then, suddenly remember something you once heard someone say, or a time when you saw someone meet a situation courageously, or a bit of song you once heard someone sing, or even a flower that once smiled at you from beside a garden path or in the summer woods? It was so important that memory made a record of it, and sometimes plays it over for you at times when your inner self could do with the thrill it gave you long ago. This shows how expressions, communications all along the way have been built into your life. Fortunate are you if they are beautiful and good, and if those you express are the same.

The greatest and best of all these expressions that enter our lives and become parts of them are the emanations from the Mind of the Eternal One. Some pursue us and overtake us, and others have to be recognized and possessed through meditation and prayer. Then our lives become mirrors that reflect some of them on to others as our own communications, as moonlight is reflected sunlight.

Great, then, are the meanings and values of communication. Great too is the variety of the forms in which it comes. The New Testament recommends consecrated communication again and again. For instance, in the Thirteenth Chapter of the Letter to the Hebrews we read, "To do good and to communicate forget not." Communication is an exalted form of sharing. It goes on whether we do anything about it or not, so why not make it the best we can?

AFFIRMATION

Even in my most silent moments I am communicating something to others. I try to make it something worth both giving and receiving.

Blessings,

Your Instructor.

