

Four Ways We Communicate

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Sometimes the simplest explanation of something can have a profound impact. Years ago Milton Friedman came up with his four ways to spend money.



These are,

Spend your own money on yourself. This is the most efficient and productive way to spend money. The buyer gets exactly what he wants. In a free market system, this approach is very common.

Spend your own money on someone else. This is a very efficient way to spend money, but less so than number 1.

Spend someone else's money on

yourself. This approach is quite a bit less efficient than numbers 1 and 2.

Spend someone else's money on someone else. This method is completely inefficient. This is how government spends money. This is quite reckless.

I am borrowing Friedman's concept to show that there are also four ways to communicate. The brain is complicated but some things it does are automatic and other's require in depth thought. I think it is safe to call the automatic brain the animal brain and the bigger brain the thinking brain. The animal brain of a human functions in about the same way it does in any other animal. This part of the brain is affectionately often referred to as a person's inner lizard. In the examples below, just for fun, I am going to use the term inner lizard.

On a routine basis, most of what we do during the day results from what our inner lizard insists we do. This is actually a good and necessary part of the brain. It makes sure we survive. Without it we would die.

If a person is doing something like work a math problem or analyzing the meaning of a poem, the thinking brain gets the nod and the inner lizard takes a break. Humans are generally unaware of which brain is in charge. There is something unique about the inner lizard. It does not do anything at all to determine whether or not what it believes is true or not.

One time my wife and I rescued a dog. There seemed to be nothing wrong with it at all. One day I was in the yard and picked up a big stick to throw away. The dog suddenly high tailed it and got as far away from me as it could. Clearly someone at one time had

whopped it with a stick. From then on, the dog's inner lizard deemed any human with a stick in his hand to be a serious threat.

A human's inner lizard functions the same way. It does not do any analysis. It just comes up with a conclusion. Hypnotism, is a technique whereby the thinking brain is sent on vacation while the hypnotist addresses the inner lizard alone. Everything the hypnotist tells it gets registered as an absolute indisputable fact. This is why advertisements target a person's inner lizard. Who wants a potential buyer to think real hard when they can be convinced to buy without raising any questions. The inner lizard can keep you alive. It can also get you into a lot of trouble when you genuinely need to think something through.

With this in mind here are the four ways humans communicate.

Thinking Brain to Thinking brain. A professor gives a lecture to students trying very hard to understand.

Thinking Brain to Inner Lizard. A good salesman is likely to speak from his thinking brain directly with a prospect's inner lizard. This is the way politicians communicate with constituents. This method is employed when the goal is to convince another of something in the shortest period of time. That is politics and sales.

Inner Lizard to Thinking Brain. This occurs when a constituent requests something from an elected representative.

Inner Lizard to Inner Lizard. This is what occurs when two constituents talk politics. You can search day and night without finding any sentient or thoughtful interaction between two people hashing out a political argument. What you find are conclusions used as arguments and nothing that can be substantiated. What you get are arguments of the following nature. Trump good...Biden Bad or visa versa. Today we constantly hear NATO good.....Putin bad. Russia is our problem. China is our problem and so on. No one talking like this ever takes the time to try and understand why Putin is really doing something or what NATO's concerns about Russia are really based upon. Who needs to do that when the inner lizard already knows what NATO is about and 'what Putin is about. In a contest between the thinking brain and the inner lizard, the inner lizard always wins. Its job is to make sure you survive. The first image shows a communication between an elected official and a constituent. The second image illustrated how two citizens communicate during a political discussion. As cute as this is, I am not trying to be funny. Communication really works this way. One thing to look for in coming days is an increase in suffering within the United States. Suffering does cause the thinking brain to kick in and question what the inner lizard thinks it believes. I am no fan of suffering. But it can shock people out of the mal-adaptive behavior they are engaging in. So, in that sense suffering does serve a purpose.



