

The Right to Remain Silent

Text: James 1:19

Even in our closest relationships, words carry a tremendous amount of weight.

Sometimes, of course, the conflict may be about something that someone has *done* — but more often than not, our greatest conflicts are caused by something that someone has *said*.

Three Pre-Speech Habits to Aim For

1. Before you _____, make sure no one else is speaking.

Everyone should quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. (James 1:19)

Here's a challenge for you. Whenever someone wants to talk to you let them talk. Let them say everything that they want to say. And let them finish *before* you begin to respond.

Sometimes people just need to talk. They just need a chance to say what's on their mind or what's in their heart to someone who cares enough to hear them. I'm challenging you to be quick to be the listener.

2. Before you speak, make an effort to _____.

"Most people don't listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." Ref: Proverbs 18:13

I suggest that every boss, and every parent, and every pastor, and every ministry leader give this a try: give the people you work with and serve with and lead with and live with the opportunity to say everything they need to say, and as they say it, listen with the intent to understand.

"Big people monopolize the listening. Small people monopolize the talking."

Before you speak, make an effort to understand. Do your due diligence. Listen to what's being said. Check the facts. Give it some thought and weigh your response.

3. Before you speak, consider saying _____ at all.

If we're not careful, we can talk ourselves into more trouble than we deal with. It's better sometimes, to say nothing at all.
Ref: Proverbs 21:23; 17:28; 11:12

That the more we talk and the less we listen, the more out of control our emotions become.