

Real Conversations

Adrian Mitchell

As human beings we are always in a constant state of interaction with the world around us and the world within us. There is no break in this interaction; as they say, it is 24/7. It cannot be any other way. To suggest it could be is to suggest that a separateness exists...in other words that somehow we can separate ourselves from the world inside or outside of us. We certainly can think this and even experience it as a result of our thoughts, but when we do this and get caught up in and restricted by our small mindedness we completely miss the bigger picture of the interconnection and oneness of life and the understanding, peace and joy emanating from it. Watch out for this; if we hand over the reins of our life to our mind it will bring us down an ever narrowing path separating us from the joys and possibilities of life and possibly even into disillusion, depression and despair.

Inner Conversations

There are many ways that this state of interaction with the inner and outer worlds take place, but for this article we will focus on one, that being our conversations. These conversations over a period of time determine our quality of life experience. Our dominant way of conversing with others will set up our overall experience of life with them. Our dominant way of conversing with ourselves will set up how we converse with others. We therefore need to be watchful of how we are talking to ourselves, what we are saying, and paying particular attention to the tones we use with ourselves. These tones give us an indication of the extent of the “negative” energy we may be unwittingly using against ourselves, even if in these self conversations we are giving out about others. These tones used against others in our inner conversations are actually being used against ourselves. We also need to use these conversations with ourselves as the default position when we are trying to understand why we are having problems with others. Otherwise we will simply find ourselves going around in circles in our heads with little chance of gaining any degree of understanding of what is going on and how to change it. While there may well be idle chatter going on in our minds on a fairly consistent basis, we do not have idle conversations with ourselves. The conversations we have with ourselves are always meaningful and have a direct link to our life experience. It is not just worth listening in on a regular basis to these conversations, it is vital.

Being a witness to these inner conversations allows you to notice over a period of time the potential damage you may be doing to yourself. You begin to notice that they are not just one off conversations; they represent a pattern of energy moving through you. Clearly if these conversations are healthy, keep having them! But if they are unhealthy, then they need to be changed. Your inner life sets up your outer life. So you can also be a witness to what your outer life is like and as long as you relate it to your inner conversations you have another important vantage point of your life patterns. Being a witness to your inner conversations and life patterns is clearly crucial, but only if you start making the changes necessary to have the life experiences you desire and require.

How will you know what kind of changes to make or even where and when to begin? Firstly, being a witness brings with it a knowing and understanding of the general patterns alive inside and secondly, your ongoing interactions and conversations with others on a daily basis will bring you the detail of the level of changes and where and when they are required. Your outer life is the playground where you get to change the players, the goalposts, and the games to suit your own special needs and talents. By combining your awareness of both your inner and outer lives you have the key to your destiny and your promised land. Let us now look at your outer playground and what it might be trying to tell you about your life. To do this we will look at the relationships in your life and the conversations that drive their dynamics.

Supportive relationships

Our conversations with the different people in our lives can vary dramatically from easy flowing conversations to hard, rigid, frustrating and irritating conversations. Some of our relationships quite simply require very little work. In these relationships our conversations are so easy and even when challenges are met the conversations may only make it to the slightly “awkward” level and this awkwardness dissipates pretty soon as there is no energy to keep driving it. Quite simply where and when there is flow, there is flow! When this happens we experience a sense of “contentedness” with the other person. This could be any relationship, but will more than likely represent relationships that either are “supportive” in their energy to us or are “friendly functional” in their energy to us. The supportive energy could be in the form of friends or work colleagues whose relationship with us we would consider as “easy” or “flowing”. It could also be family members who we “get on well with” and again there is “flow” and “ease” to the relationship. Be grateful for these relationships and their corresponding conversations!

Friendly functional relationships

The “friendly functional” energy could be brought to us by those we meet on a regular basis who perhaps are our shopkeeper, hairdresser, or others who serve us on a daily basis (or perhaps we serve them) and again “ease” and “flow” are words that would be used to describe the energy.

Challenging relationships

Other relationships which could be called “challenging” can easily be identified by nearly every conversation that takes place. These are relationships where a level of conversation has been “entered into” by both parties which will always seek to keep the “status quo”. Usually this is done unconsciously, but sometimes it is also consciously created. It is like as if both parties automatically know that they just can’t “go there”, even if they have never actually “gone there” before. At best we “get by” in these relationships but probably with an unsettling undercurrent of fear and dread. Sometimes one or the other in the relationship will attempt to bring the conversation to a “real” level, but usually this isn’t followed through on and reverts to the status quo with an added edge! This new edge generally suffices to frighten the more courageous one off, for a while at least. These relationships can be with work colleagues, bosses, friends, family members, parents or even partners!

What are real conversations?

So, what are real conversations? These are conversations that basically deal with the “reality” of any given situation. How do we determine “reality” when “reality” is different for every person you may well ask? The “reality” of any given situation between two or more people is determined by, and lies within, the energy dynamics between them. The “reality” between them is based on their individual realities coming together. The problems don’t lie between people, they lie within people. As mentioned in previous articles, other people trigger our experiences and we trigger others’ experience. So, the reality of any given situation between people is readily available to all concerned if they are willing to look at, and listen to it. It is there, staring back. It is nothing more, nothing less or nothing different...it is what it is. This is the reality of the current situation. Real conversations are the conversations we know we need to have but oftentimes unfortunately we may be afraid to have them. Perhaps this is because we don’t know how to have that conversation or don’t know when it is the right time to have it or we are afraid of what the consequences may be if we do have it. Yet we nearly always know when we need to have these conversations. If these conversations are with our partners (and often they are) then what are we doing most of the time with the person who is supposed in theory to mean more than anyone else to us?

Real conversations with ourselves

How hard it must be when we consistently fail to take the opportunity, seize the moment, take the bull by the horns or simply do what we know we have to do? Why do we find ourselves so often in this kind of a situation with people? In order to have real conversations with others, particularly with those who challenge us most, we need firstly to have real conversations with ourselves. What is blocking us from having those real conversations with ourselves? What is stopping us from saying what we know we need to say? It has to be something inside us that is blocking us. We already know that all our life experience comes from within so therefore any problems we are having with others are also coming from within. So what is happening within us? Fear of loss seems to freeze out hope of gain. And that gain is what we need to focus on. In our hearts we know we are not dealing with reality and we so badly want to change this. We know that by changing this we are opening the self built prison gates and letting ourselves out into the real world. Yes, there may well be fear there, but there is also hope and by having a real conversation with ourselves we can minimise the fear and maximise the hope. This is what real conversations will always deliver. When we listen to our hearts and allow ourselves to be led by them then we will finally have had that conversation and we will know what needs to happen. That conversation has to happen within first. Then we will be able to have it (a different conversation) with the other person.

Who else do you need to have real conversations with?

Who do you need to have real conversations with? If there is more than one person then pick out one at a time and ask yourself what is required here to allow the relationship to be real? What do you need to do within you to allow this to happen? Do not look outside yourself for answers. There are none out there...only distractions, distortions and lies.

You will fool yourself again if you go outside yourself for the answers. Its time to stop fooling yourself! Its time to take full responsibility for your experiences. Its time to heal and be real. It's not just possible for you to do this; it is essential. Your relationships represent you and your conversations determine your relationships. Your conversations are always about you. Follow your heart, and by heart I do not mean emotions! Your heart is your intuition, your gut, your knowing. It is that warm sense that you experience within you when you do listen to your heart. You need to stop having those nonsensical conversations that as soon as you have had them you realise another opportunity to be real has gone. Be real now!

Friends

If you need to be real with a friend, ask yourself what is this friend telling you about yourself? What has this friend always been telling you about yourself? What do you need to learn about yourself that this friend keeps bringing up? Have this conversation with yourself now. Remember, this is not about your friend. It is not even about your relationship with your friend! It is solely about you.

Family members

If you need to be real with a family member, ask yourself what is this family member telling you about yourself? What has this family always been telling you about yourself? What do you need to learn about yourself that this family member keeps bringing up? This is solely about you! You may be asking yourself, "but what about this family member? Why should they get away with the way they have treated me all these years? You have no power or control over anybody else, at least not legitimately and ultimately, not at all. That other person is the only one with that power. What they do with it is their business and literally has nothing to do with you. Just like what you choose to do with your life and your relationships have nothing to do with them. If we all decided to be real, then what a wonderful world it would be!

Work colleagues

If you need to be real with a work colleague, ask yourself what is this work colleague telling you about you? What message is this person bringing to you? Look at your reactions in relation to this work colleague. What are you doing internally? Remember it is not their fault, no matter how much evidence you have! Neither is it your fault! It is nobody's fault. It never is and never will be. There is no fault and there is no blame. Where and when we see fault and blame we block out truth...our truth, the truth. Fault and blame will always distort the truth. Make sure you go beyond fault and blame; otherwise you are stuck like a broken record, singing the same lines over and over again and getting nowhere.

The Boss

If you need to be real with your boss, ask yourself what your boss is representing to you? What is your boss telling you about you? Don't start giving out about your boss to yourself; this is both frustrating and completely pointless. Just simply ask..."what am I being asked to look at in myself here with this person in order to grow?" You and only you have the answer. Look for it. It is there. Do not be afraid. There is nothing to fear.

Remember this is solely about you. Is your boss asking you to value yourself more? Is your boss asking you to stand up for yourself? Is your boss asking you if you are in the right job, or the right frame of mind?

Business Partner

If you need to be real with your business partner, ask yourself what is your business partner reflecting back to you about yourself? What questions do you need to ask yourself? What questions do you need to ask your business partner? Is your business partner highlighting your values for you? Is your business partner asking you to be more real and present? Is your business partner challenging you to be yourself? Have those conversations now!

Life Partner/Spouse

If you need to be real with your life partner, ask yourself what is your life partner asking you to look at in yourself so that you are more at peace with yourself? Your life partner, your choice of partner for life is obviously a very important person in your life. Your partner will probably challenge you more than any other person on an ongoing basis and vice versa. This is part of the deal to help each other to be real. If you can't be real in this relationship then you are flunking the main reasons why you are in the relationship in the first place. Don't keep missing these valuable opportunities to grow, to be real, and to be present. What are the questions being presented to you by your life partner? Again, this is not about your life partner...it is solely about you. Only you know the answers. Only you know the questions. Ask the questions of yourself and get the answers from yourself. The more you decide to get real, the more your life partner will be able to help you with your growth and vice versa.

Coaching your Clients towards having real conversations

Suffice to say that you will only be doing this if it part of the client's agenda. It is very important not to let your desire to help get in the way of your client's journey. Listen to your client's language. Listen to the patterns emerging particularly those involving relationships. Challenge your clients appropriately. Bring their attention to what they are saying or what they appear to be saying. Help them to make the connections between what they are experiencing in their relationships and their own patterns. Ask the questions such as the ones asked throughout this article. When helping your clients to deal with "challenging" relationships you will need to be challenging with them. The reason why these challenging relationships are still in existence for your client is that they are consistently flunking the necessary challenges to change them. Thus their conversations remain the same. As you know your client cannot possibly change their conversations with others until they change them with themselves. It is important that they see this and work from this basis. Do not push your client too much, but make sure you push them enough! Don't worry! You will know what the fine line is as long as you are being present in your coaching sessions.

Political conversations

I could have dodged this but given what is going on in Irish politics currently I will stick my neck out here, not to make a statement (my neck isn't that thick!), but rather to ask a

question! So, here is a question for you all regardless of what political persuasion (if any) you may have: Have we seen “real” conversations over the past week between Fianna Fail and the Green Party in the lead up to the Green Party’s “will we pull the plug on the government or won’t we” convention? Or have we witnessed yet another raft of “delusional” conversations putting personal power and ego of the few above the greater good of over 4 million people? Perhaps only time will tell but maybe in the very near future the now sadly familiar odours of self interest, short sightedness, greed and small minded agendas will be wafting into every town, village, street, town land and household around the country? If so, more of the same and more’s the shame! But hopefully not! Either way, we don’t have to breathe in this toxic energy, although we do need to be aware of it. In the meantime, let us cultivate our own energy of personal responsibility, emotional and spiritual intelligence, self empowerment and social consciousness, born out of real conversations with ourselves and those around us and breathe it out and breathe it in. After all, either we believe we create our own reality, or we don’t!

Copyright Adrian Mitchell 2009