

CARE TO CONNECT

Tips & Tools for Authentic Communication



NOVEMBER 2020

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FROM THE DESK OF

Rebecca Buell, Our Community Listens Executive Director

If you had a gift that could change lives, improve relationships, make teammates more effective at work, and increase peace in the home, would you want to share it?

This month's spotlight article features YOU—survey results from over 400 of the 11,000 people who've taken OCL over the last 10 years. You told us two, three, and five years later our flagship class still impacts the way you communicate with people at work, home, and play. Ninety-six percent (96%) of you said you'd recommend the class to a friend. An overwhelming majority of you said you'd want to share the class experience with others.

In this season of thanks, we are grateful for those of you who want to generously share these resources to help people connect better as partners, parents, teammates, leaders, and family. As always, please share this newsletter with a friend!

Learning alongside you,
Rebecca

TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY

Universal connection tools for the areas where we work, serve or interact

WEBINAR: "How to Be a Better Listener"

Perfect for those who have not yet attended our Communication Skills Training. This one-hour class is a primer on empathetic listening. Attendees will discover the impact nonverbal communication has on their message and learn the five reflective listening skills. Choose **ONE** of the following dates:

- o [November 10, 10:30-11:30am CT](#)
- o [December 8, 10:30-11:30am CT](#)

WEBINAR: "What is Really Bugging Me"

Judging people through our own lens can drive disconnection and lead to misunderstanding. Learn to focus on observable behavior to communicate effectively, lead well and influence change. Choose **ONE** of the following dates:

- o [November 12, 10:30am-Noon CT](#)
- o [November 17, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)
- o [November 21, 9:00-10:30am CT](#)

WEBINAR: "The Impact of Impact and Recognizing Others"

Sharing the impact of behavior motivates change. When people are recognized for their value, they continue behaviors that support growth and development. Join this discussion on recognition and the impact of behaviors – yours and others.

- o [December 10, 10:30am-Noon CT](#)

CONNECTION SESSION:

Connect with others as we learn about utilizing communication skills and concepts in every day, real life moments. Sessions are interactive with information and conversation that can be applied immediately. The participants help shape the discussion based on the needs expressed by the group. Choose **ONE** of the following times:

- o [November 19, 10:30am-Noon, CT](#)
- o [November 24, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)

CHALLENGE: Notice when you are judging yourself and others. Make a shift to simply observe the behavior.

PODCASTS:

["Confrontation: Just Crucial Conversations"](#)
["Confrontation: Help Me Do This Well"](#)

SKILLS SNIPPET:

"Why Are You Acting That Way?"
[Watch](#) or [Listen](#)

TOOLS FOR HOME

Resources for parenting, education, family & committed relationships

WEBINAR: "Mastering My Stories"

Learn how the stories we tell ourselves about our partner's behavior impact our emotions and the way we respond to them. We will explore how to be intentional about the stories we tell ourselves to create a safe space to talk with our partner. Can our partner really MAKE us mad?

- o [November 12, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)

WEBINAR: "Using Recognition With Your Child or Teen"

How can you give meaningful feedback to your child or teen? Even during stressful times, letting them know they are seen and appreciated can go a long way in building a positive environment. Not only that, training ourselves to actively look for things to appreciate can help us develop positive thoughts as parents.

- o [November 19, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)

WEBINAR: "Parenting Together in a Committed Relationship"

Navigating through parenting together in a committed relationship can be challenging. In "Parenting Together" we'll learn how to better understand how we often parent in ways that meet our own needs and how to engage in healthy dialogue with our partner.

- o [December 3, 6:00-7:30pm CT](#)

CHALLENGE: The next time you find yourself getting angry with your partner, take a pause. What is the specific behavior getting under your skin? What story are you telling yourself about that behavior?

PODCASTS:

["Confrontation: Just Crucial Conversations"](#)
["Confrontation: Help Me Do This Well"](#)

SKILLS SNIPPETS:

"Mastering My Stories"
[Watch](#)

"Judging Our Partner and the Impact"
[Watch](#) or [Listen](#)

What's New?

Webinars:

"How to be a Better Listener"
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"What is Really Bugging Me"
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"Mastering My Stories"

- [November 12, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)

"Using Recognition with Child or Teen"

- [November 19, 5:30-7:00pm CT](#)

"Parenting Together in a Committed Relationship"

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Connect Sessions:

Choose one:

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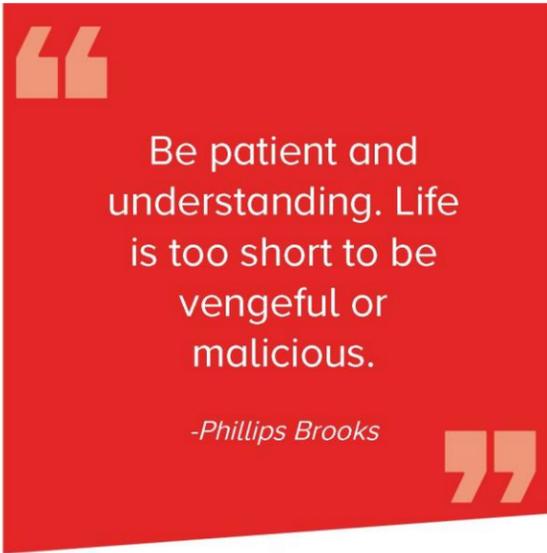
Podcasts:

["Character Education"](#)

Blog Post:

["A Shortage of Grace"](#)

ICYMI ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Do you have a social media post you'd like to share with us? Just tag @OurCommunityListens and include #CareToConnect and we'll find it!

SPOTLIGHT ON: OCL Alumni Survey

Earlier this year Our Community Listens partnered with a national research firm to survey alumni about your experience in our three-day flagship class. The results are in! The survey results overwhelmingly support the anecdotal observations made over the years that our three-day CST class has a positive effect on nearly everyone who takes it.

To learn more, we interviewed Marsha Burns, OCL's Director of Content Quality and Curriculum Development. Read on to learn about the exciting ways OCL will be adapting to meet the needs identified in the survey.

What did you hope to gain from the survey?

Marsha: The purpose was to capture quantitative data about the impact of the class and to improve the class experience, as well as identify topics our alumni want to continue to develop. We have many stories and qualitative reactions from our learners, but we really had no specific information to work from as we looked to grow the impact of the class and the experience of our alumni and future learners.

What surprised you the most?

Marsha: One big surprise was the power of the class in people who took it up to five years ago. The exuberance and excitement that came through in survey responses about using the skills to better their relationships and to feel that they were growing was really reinforcing to all of us.

How will OCL change in response to the survey?

Marsha: With the input from the survey, we are dedicating resources to design continuing education classes to aid our alumni strengthen their relationships. And to be more accessible to all learners, we are adding a seven-session virtual CST course, taught over seven weeks, for those whom the in-person, three-day course was a barrier.

What does the future of OCL look like?

Marsha: The survey has told us that this work makes a difference. It saves marriages, it heals broken relationships, it brings connection to a disconnected world. Armed with this knowledge, we will expand the platforms we use to give us a more global presence. We will go online, using social media as well as classroom-based training, to bring these much needed skills to our hurting world.

Is there anything else you'd like our alumni to know?

Marsha: So many thanks to our alumni – you are the backbone and the foundation! Your encouragement and genuine contributions to help us improve are enormous in nurturing this organization.

Special thanks to Maryland-based Cygnus Corporation for conducting the survey and letting us hear your powerful voices. Also a huge thanks to the 444 of you who were able to respond. We are listening!

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

- 9 out of 10 survey respondents said their lives had improved as a result of the training, with more than a third attesting to very positive changes.
- 2 out of 3 reported positive personal changes at work such as greater job satisfaction.
- Post class, the most frequently used skills were empathy (90%), reflective listening (89%), and promptly dealing with issues in their lives (84%).

