

VivaNews™ -July 2008

A Jumping-Off Point™

“The Never-Ending Two-Way Street”

“Consider the following. We humans are social beings. We come into the world as the result of others' actions. We survive here in dependence on others. Whether we like it or not, there is hardly a moment of our lives when we do not benefit from others' activities. For this reason it is hardly surprising that most of our happiness arises in the context of our relationships with others.”

– His Holiness The Dalai Lama

Back when I was in graduate school, I had a professor who introduced to me to the field of human development throughout the lifespan and ever since then, I have been fascinated by it. (I am now writing on this subject as it applies to women in middle adulthood and will share the links to these articles in a future e-zine).

As a child psychotherapist, I have studied childhood development extensively and came to understand that patterns of human interaction began very early on. For the first two months or so of life, the interaction between caretaker and infant is pretty much a one way street. The mother's (or any primary caretaker) job is to regulate the infant by learning the infant's signals, soothing the infant and ministering to her needs. But, the very first time the infant coos, smiles and makes those expressions that we as humans are hard-wired to respond to spontaneously (usually in the form of profound vocalizations such as “Aww...” and baby talk as well as exaggerated facial expressions) – the two-way street of human interaction begins and never ends.

These successful, consistent back and forth interactions between baby and caretaker are the building blocks of language and social-emotional development. When these interactions go well and increase in complexity over time, the baby, in essence, feels like a competent baby and the mother like a competent mother. When they don't go well - because the infant, for example, may have developmental delays or disorders – caretakers can begin to feel disheartened and discouraged. Fortunately, with good developmental psychotherapy, these problems can improve...some significantly.

But even worse are the devastating effects on parents whose children are eventually identified as attachment-disordered. Several years ago, we learned about the importance of the first three years of life through the very sad lesson taught to us by the children adopted from Romania. Many of these children, because of the lack of loving, soothing

human contact and reciprocal interactions in the warehouse style orphanages, had a myriad of irreversible learning and behavioral problems, and a profound lack of capacity for reciprocal relationships. They were consistently on a one-way street— one that was expected to lead only to them.

More than anything, we as human beings need – and thrive on - reciprocal relationships...and this is true throughout the life cycle. Did you ever start a friendship with someone and after a time, found yourself feeling used? After many carefully planned get-togethers cancelled by your “friend” with little notice and a lot of giving of resources and time on your part with little return, you eventually gave up on the relationship. Without reciprocity, relationships cannot last.

And this is as true in business and professional relationships as it is in love and friendship relationships. No matter what your enterprise, no matter if it lives online or offline, you will have to build reciprocity into it. How do we accomplish this, especially in a time when we are all so busy and so much of what we do is done virtually?

Here are just a few suggestions for your colleague or client/customer relationships:

- If you have an online business or have at least a part of it online, offer a free report, a list of tips, an e-book or audio that is substantive. In order to get someone to trust us with her email address, we have to give something worthwhile in return.
- When networking - whether in person or online – do so with the intention of building relationships, not just collecting names and business cards.
- Remember details about a person and when you follow up with them or see them again, ask about those details...”how was your trip?”, “how as your daughter’s wedding?”, “I remember you were trying to find ‘X’, I saw something like that in...”
- Recommend colleagues as resources
- Edify others
- Acknowledge birthdays, special occasions and achievements
- Acknowledge others and extend gratitude
- If asked to be interviewed for an audio or written piece by a colleague, return the favor
- Determine ways to joint venture and create win-win partnerships
- Volunteer to help them out

As always, I welcome your suggestions for additional ways to build reciprocity. Please feel free to respond to this article with your ideas on my blog.

Building reciprocity into your enterprise is a jumping-off point for your growth and success.

WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR E-ZINE OR WEB SITE? You can, as long as you include this complete blurb with it: Kate Sanner is the CEO and founder of Vivacity. As “Jump Instructor”, Kate helps a woman on the verge of doing great things to take the leap into the life she has been dreaming of...whether it’s starting a business, writing a book or fulfilling a life long ambition. Once a woman has made the jump, Kate then provides tools and resources so that a woman can continue to take herself to new levels and to maximize and monetize all her efforts for continuous growth, financial gain and success. She is also a podcaster, Ezine publisher and internet radio show host. To get a **FREE** copy of Vivacity’s “The Think and Play **BIG** System”™, a 10 Step, 46-page guide,- a \$57 value - that shows you how to bring your vision for your enterprise into reality and onto new levels, go to www.vivacitynow.com and fill in your first name and primary email address in the box in the upper right hand corner.