CHAPTER FIVE

INTENTIONS IN CONVERSATION AND INTERACTION (DIMENSION 2)

5.1. Intentions - the missing link

Akmajian, et al., propose that "Linguistic communication is possible because the speaker and hearer share a system of inferential strategies leading from the utterances [sic] of an expression to the hearer's recognition of the speaker's communicative intent."[89]   That is to say, since most sentences can be understood in a variety of ways, communication is successful not when the listener simply understands the words but when the listener also correctly infers the speaker's communicative intention[90] from both the words and the context in which they are spoken. A person who drives into a gas station and says, "I want ten gallons of regular." is actually making the request, "Please sell me ten gallons of gas." rather than merely describing a subjective state of desire.[91] The attendant will probably correctly infer the intended request because it is situationally appropriate. (A sarcastic attendant could highlight the lack of a specific request by saying, "And I want a trip to Hawaii, so what else is new?", mirroring a statement of desire with another statement of desire.[92])

In this view of communication, which follows along the lines of "speech act"

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[89]Adrian Akmajian, Richard Demers, Ann K. Farmer and Robert M. Harnish, *Linguistics*, 3rd ed., (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 315.

[90]The description of the inference model given in the Akmajian text is parallel to the summary of Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory in Littlejohn, *Human Communication Theory*, 133.

[91]This example adapted from one in Akmajian, et al., *Linguistics*, 326.

[92]For a discussion of sarcasm in the form of responding to the literal rather than actual meaning of another person's statement, see Goodman, *The Talk Book*, 120.

philosophy of language developed by John Austin[93] and John Searle,[94] the heart of interpersonal communication is to recognize what another person is <u>trying to accomplish</u> by using various words and sentences, one or more goals which are usually not stated explicitly by the other person. In this usage intention is understood to mean <u>both</u> having a situational goal and being committed to reaching it by taking various actions.[95]

5.2. Intentions - the missing topic

In spite of a great deal of advocacy from different schools of thought, the idea that <u>the recognition of a person's communicative intent is at the heart of interpersonal communication</u> has not found it's way into any of the ten popular books on the subject which I own. *Straight Talk*[96] come the closest with a discussion of both <u>kinds of conversations</u> and <u>sharing one's goals and intentions</u>, but it does not put the two together to suggest that one might <u>state the kind of conversation one wanted to have</u>. *Parent Effectiveness Training*[97] includes discussions to help parents clarify their communicative intentions toward their children. Parents are encouraged to determine whether a given problem   "belongs to the child," in which case the parent mostly reflects the child's experience to help the child formulate her or his own solutions; or whether the problem "belongs to the parent," in which case the parent needs to engage in active negotiation with the child. Although everyday conversations often include conversation-arranging comments such as, "Right now I'd like to talk to you about...[subject matter]," neither *Straight Talk* nor *P.E.T.* encourage people to make such meta-communicative overtures. In *The Talk Book*,[98] Gerald Goodman makes a clear but very brief reference to the desirability of reaching an agreement before trying to have a conversation in which one person intends to do most of the talking, but he does not develop the idea of meta-communicative overtures as a general theme.

I can imagine communication-oriented authors not wanting to get too involved in

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[93]John Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).
[94]John Searle, *Speech Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).
[95]Michael E. Bratman, "What is Intention?" in Philip R. Cohen, Jerry Morgan and Martha E. Pollack, eds., *Intentions in Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990).
[96]Miller, et al., *Straight Talk.*
[97]Thomas Gordon, *Parent Effectiveness Training* (New York: Penguin, 1975).
[98]Goodman, *The Talk Book*, 29.

the topic of intentions for fear of getting bogged down in a subjective swamp of psychological issues concerning desires, plans, goals and how people manage to carry them out. But, as Bratman notes concerning intentions, "To achieve complex goals, I must coordinate my present and future activities. And I need also to coordinate my activities with yours. Future-directed intentions help facilitate both intra- and interpersonal coordination."[99] This suggests to me that the topic of intentions is probably unavoidable in any descriptively rich account of human functioning.

From the point of view of the symbolic interactionist school of sociology, society consists of cooperative behavior, and cooperative behavior (joint action) requires understanding the intentions of others.[100] In other words, understanding the intentions of other people is at the heart of human social life, a topic cannot be avoided.

5.3. The nature of intentions in human interaction

Although at first glance one might think of intentions as a matter of will power and commitment, there is a cognitive side to the process of intending. Intentions appear to be part of a natural abstracting process through which people combine smaller units of thought and action into larger performances and programs of action.[101] The topic of intentions points our attention toward the issue of hierarchies in human experience and functioning. As Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson put it, "...a hierarchy of levels seems to pervade the world we live in and our experience of selves and others, and ... valid statements about one level can only be made from the next higher one."[102] Not only is there a logical necessity to go "one level up" in order to make valid statements about a given level; there appears to be a cognitive necessity to go "one level up" in order to be able to conceive of and to plan for action on a given level. (Kegan asserts just such a necessity, but defines the 'levels' differently than Watzlawick, et al.) Each higher level is the context for the one below it. Pearce, et al., present one possible cartography of such levels of context in interpersonal communication, as shown in Figure 5.1, below.

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[99]Michael E. Bratman, "What is Intention?" in Philip R. Cohen, Jerry Morgan and Martha E. Pollack, eds., *Intentions in Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 18.

[100]Littlejohn, *Human Communication Theory*, 161.

[101]Bratman, "What is Intention?," 18.

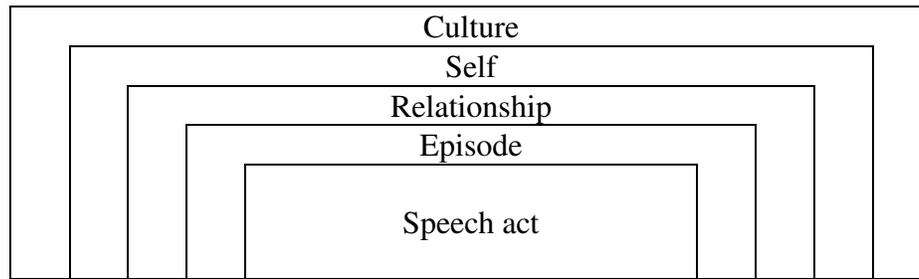[102]Watzlawick, et al., *Pragmatics*, 260.

Figure 5.1. The hierarchy of contexts in interpersonal communication. (From Pearce, et al.[103])

Although the hierarchy shown in Figure 5.1 starts with speech acts (declaring, requesting, promising, etc.), speech acts themselves require the weaving together of awareness, desires, gestures, words, tone of voice, which in turn weave together syllables and neuro-muscular performances, and so on down to the smallest subatomic particle. Each level appears to be coordinated by the one above it.

5.4. Intention, cognition and human development

I believe that there is a profound parallelism between this structure of progressively more encompassing contexts, and Robert Kegan's view of the successive levels of social-cognitive development, although the two frameworks are not identical. Pearce, et al., present the hierarchy of contexts as being simultaneously present as the backdrop of all communication, but they do not describe how conversants become aware of the levels of context. Kegan describes the gradual unfolding of awareness of each successive level, an awareness that allows a person to coordinate all the levels below the one they are 'standing in' or 'grounded in.' One reason intentions are a psychologically significant issue is that any inquiry into intentions demands that a person climb up at least one rung on the ladder of contexts. And that, for Kegan, is the fundamental growth exercise of human development.

I interpret the Pearce, et al., model noted above to suggest that our intentions for a

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[103]W. Barnett Pearce, Vernon E. Cronen and R. Forrest Conklin. "On What to Look At When Studying Communication: A Hierarchical Model of Actors' Meanings," *Communication* 4 (1979): 195-220, cited in Pearce, *Interpersonal Communication*, 347.

speech act or conversation grow out of the episode or situation, our intentions for an episode or situation grow out of our relationship with our conversant, and our intentions for a relationship grow at least partly out of our culture (the role we want to play with that person). While Pearce would agree that this is one possible way that contexts cluster around conversations, he also argues that the web of contexts is continually rearranging in the course of social interaction, with different contexts becoming of primary importance at different times.[104]

According to Kegan's[105] view of the normative progression in human development, the psychological ground of a person's sense of self shifts several times in the course of a lifetime. We begin life rooted, as it were, in our sensations and emotions. As we come fully into our thoughts (usually between ages 15 to 20) we begin to be able to take a perspective on the our feelings in which we were previously immersed. As we come more fully into our social role (usually between ages 25 to 35) we are develop a vantage point of larger projects from which to contemplate both our thoughts and feelings. In middle adulthood, as our life experiences in various social roles allows us to become more grounded in our power to create value systems and guiding stories at work and at home, we become more able to contemplate our social roles and to have them without having to be possessed by them. If we live in an environment that supports further development, our growing familiarity with guiding stories may allow us to develop a trans-systemic perspective in which we can view our own ideologies and meaningful stories, in which we were previously immersed, from the point of view of the universal and cross-cultural processes of meaning-making.

Thus there is an existential dimension to intentions, in that our intentions reflect our stage in the human life-cycle. We don't expect five-year-olds to fulfill the role of reliable employees. And we expect twenty-year-olds to adopt rather than create the mission statements and value structures of the organizations they become part of. We expect at least some forty-five-year-olds to frame good, new laws rather than just follow and enforce the existing ones. And we expect at least some sixty-five-year-olds (on the

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[104]Pearce, *Interpersonal Communication,* 35.
[105]The summary of Kegan's views presented here is drawn from his two most recent books, *The Evolving Self* and *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life.*

Supreme Court) to be able to articulate a vision of the universal principles that should guide the creation of all laws. As one moves up this ladder of more encompassing awareness, the time involved in a typical task gets longer and longer, from the child's first essay to the mature novelist's suite of books. Our intentions to take on age-appropriate tasks have a cognitive element in them, a sense of overview that reflects our capacity to imagine a goal and imagine the various steps that lead up to it.[106] Kegan's point is that our capacity to "overview" is a learned, quasi-algebraic skill that unfolds slowly over the course of a lifetime. I believe that the concept of "intentions" is important because it points toward the way people use their capacity to abstract in order to coordinate their life activities and to move up and down various ladders of context and time frame. Gordon W. Allport expressed a parallel idea when he wrote, "The possession of long-range goals, regarded a central to one's personal existence, distinguishes the human being from the animal, the adult from the child, and in many cases the healthy personality from the sick."[107] To which I would only add that I believe that a long-range goal, in more process terms, is a continuously renewed intention.

5.5. Encouraging the communication of intentions in conversation

Returning to the subject of interpersonal communication, I believe that, if the heart of interpersonal communication is to recognize what another person is trying to accomplish, then we might assist other people in understanding us better if we simply told them what kind of conversational transaction we are trying to have, rather than hoping that they will infer our intentions correctly. (Although such meta-communicative overtures can be observed in the talk of skilled conversants, they seem to escaped the notice of many of the communication advice-givers.) Of course, such declarations of intention would require that we know our own intent, which is not always the case, and that we are not trying to deceive our conversation partner. The effort to declare one's communicative intentions would raise both those issues, which would probably be a good thing.[108]

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[106]The examples in this paragraph are my application of Kegan's ideas.

[107]Gordon W. Allport, *Becoming* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 51.

[108]Carl Rogers viewed lack of authenticity as the central problem in human development. See Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), chap. 6.

As a result of these considerations and conclusions I have included intentions as the second of the six dimensions of first-person functioning in the Six Dimensions/Five Transformations model and I have incorporated into my concept of intention the hierarchy of contexts described by Pearce, et al. By doing this I hope to encourage people to develop the following skills and awarenesses.

- To become aware of the language of intentions and the wide range of intentions that we are capable of holding.

- To clarify their intentions through a process of self-inquiry which makes intentions the object of new self-awareness.

- To share more of their intentions with others (including conversational goals) and discern more of the intentions of others.

- To cultivate new intentions and revise existing ones in the light of new experience.

- To cultivate the intention to become more aware of one's intentions

5.6. Translating experience into intention and action

In the dynamic spiral proposed by the Six Dimensions model, intentions somehow grow out of experience, or experience is somehow translated or transformed into intentions. Several scholars familiar with the Six Dimensions model have challenged me to explain more of that transformation.   With respect to intentions in interpersonal communication, I find an illuminating link in the work of D'Andrade:

> Much of the folk model of the mind is deeply embodied in the lexicon of natural language, so that in learning the language the child learns the great distinctions between perception, cognition, affect, motivation and intention. Also, as the philosopher Zeno Vendler (1972) has pointed out, there is a close correspondence between the kinds of speech acts found in natural languages and these same categories.[109]

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[109]D'Andrade, *Development of Cognitive Anthropology*, 167.

What makes this important in understanding the link between experience and conversational intentions is that "the kinds of speech acts found in natural languages" can be understood as the kinds of conversational intentions people learn to bring to their encounters with others, what people learn and then hope to accomplish through conversational interaction. D'Andrade continues his exposition by presenting the following table of correspondences:

Speech act categories [intentions in conversation]		Mental processes

Representatives
  I hereby state, claim, deduce...
	<==>	Thoughts
		  I think, believe, infer

Directives
  I hereby order, request, invite...
	<==>	Wishes
		  I want, need, wish for

Commissives
  I hereby promise, vow, commit...
	<==>	Intentions
		  I intend to, aim to, plan to...

Expressives
  I hereby apologize, commend...
	<==>	Feelings
		  I feel sorry that, proud of...

Figure 5.2. Relation of speech act categories to mental processes. From D'Andrade, *Development of Cognitive Anthropology*, 167.

D'Andrade explains these correspondences as follows:

What this correspondence does is give an external structure by which internal mental states can be identified. That is, what are wishes? Wishes are what directives express. Thoughts are what representatives express. Intentions are what commissives express. And feelings are what expressives express. To learn to use the speech act categories is to learn the identity of the mental processes which they express.[110]

D'Andrade appears to be arguing here for a variation on the theme that our inner lives are shaped by conversations internalized early in life, a theme also advanced by the philosopher Rom Harré and the Object Relations school of psychotherapy. The speech acts available to us in a particular culture provide us with a template of categories for understanding (and thus shaping) our subjective states.

Thus, one answer to the question of how we actually translate our experience into intentions and then action, as portrayed by the Six Dimensions model, is that many (most?) human cultures provide their members with the functional equivalent of a translation table and a master script that makes is easy to go, for example, from desiring (as an experience) to desiring to ask (as an intention) to asking (as an action).

While I am happy to have this much of an answer to the question, I am not completely satisfied with this approach because it still leaves us at the mercy of our particular cultural toolkit. As I noted earlier in this essay, what do we do if our culture falls apart, or if we happen to have come from a particularly dysfunctional family?

5.7. Other views of intentions in communication

In developing my presentation of the topic of intentions, I have relied on the following authors and works in addition to those already cited above.

5.7.1. Philip R. Cohen, Jerry Morgan and Martha E. Pollack, eds., *Intentions in Communication,* [111] presents papers and responses that form a dialogue between the disciplines of philosophy and artificial intelligence. In one of these papers John Searle argues that "collective intentional behavior is a primitive phenomenon that cannot be analyzed as just the summation of individual intentional behavior..." (p. 401) Following Searle, the Six Dimensions model presents "intending" as a fundamental aspect of human experience and functioning at both the individual and various aggregate levels.

5.7.2. John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality,* [112] elaborates on the role of shared intentionality in the creation of social facts. He argues that we live in a complex web of social agreements which, once made, are taken for granted as the internalized interpretive background that makes everyday social interaction mutually understandable for the participants.

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[110]D'Andrade, *Development of Cognitive Anthropology*, 168.
[111]Philip R. Cohen, Jerry Morgan and Martha E. Pollack, eds., *Intentions in Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990).
[112]John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

5.8. Coaching individuals to express their intentions

As an example of how people might learn to express their intentions more skillfully in everyday conversations, I have included below several pages on this topic from my workshop training manual. In these pages I seek to explain the role of intentions in laypeople's terms. And I offer an elaborate exercise to help the student feel empowered to make new kinds of conversational overtures and have new kinds of conversations.

[Postscript 2002: Since 1997 when the following exercise was developed, it has become Chapter Two of *The Seven Challenges: A Workbook and Reader About Communicating More Cooperatively*. The *Workbook* is available by contribution or of charge on the Internet at www.coopcomm.org/workbook]

A. Advise
B. Comfort
✓ C. Negotiate
D. Explore
E. Request
   Etc., etc.

*Important
conversations go
better when they
begin with a duet
of intent and
consent.*

*When your
conversation
partner knows
your intention
she or he
can cooperate
more fully in
making the
conversation
a success.*

Declaring conversational intentions. *If you need to have a long, complex, important, or emotion-laden conversation with someone, briefly explain your conversational intention first and invite the consent of your intended conversation partner.* In order to help your conversation partner cooperate with you and to reduce possible misunderstandings, start important conversations by inviting your conversation partner to join you in the **specific kind of conversation** you want to have.

WHY EXPLAIN? Some conversations require a lot more time, effort and involvement than others. If you want to have a conversation requiring a significant amount of effort from the other person, it will go better if that person understands what he or she is getting into and consents to participate. Of course, in giving up the varying amounts of coercion and surprise that are at work when we just launch into whatever we want to talk about, we are more vulnerable to being turned down. But, if the other person agrees to talk with us, they will be more present in the conversation and more able to either meet our needs or explain why they cannot (and perhaps suggest alternatives we had not thought of).

Many good communicators do this **explaining intent/inviting consent** without giving it any thought. They start important conversations by saying things such as:

- **"Hi, Steve. I need to ask for your help on my project. Got a minute to talk about it?"**
- **"Uh...Maria, do you have a minute? Right now I'd like to talk to you about...   Is that OK?"**
- **"Well, sit down for a minute and let me tell you what happened..."**
- **"Hello there, Mr. Sanchez. Say, uh...I'm not completely comfortable about this job. Can we talk about it?"**
- **"Hi, Jerry, this is Mike. How ya doin'? I want to talk you about Fred. He's in jail again. Is this a good time to talk?"**

Such combined explanations-of-intent and invitations-to-consent (C.E.I.'s, for short) can help your conversations along in several ways:

First, C.E.I.'s can give the listener a chance to consent to or decline the offer of a specific conversation. A person who has agreed to participate will participate more fully.

Second, C.E.I.'s can help the listener understand the "big picture," the overall context in which the speaker hopes the listener will understand what is about to be said. (Many researchers assert that understanding the speaker's conversational intention is crucial for understanding the speaker's message.)

explanations of intent and invitations to consent

Third, C.E.I.'s can allow the listener to get ready for what is coming, especially if the topic is emotionally charged. (If you surprise people by launching into emotional conversations, they may respond by avoiding further conversations with you or by being permanently on guard.)

And fourth, C.E.I.'s can help the listener understand the role that the speaker wants the listener to play in the conversation.

GETTING EXPLICIT. Often people conduct this "negotiation about conversation" through body language and tone of voice during the first few seconds of interaction. But since we often have to talk with people whose body language and tone of voice patterns may be quite different from ours, we may need to be more explicit and direct in the way we ask people to have conversations with us. The more important the conversation, the more important it is to have your partner's consent. Just saying, "Hi!", or talking about the weather does not require agreement, because a person can easily indicate with their tone of voice whether or not they are interested in chatting.

To be invited into a conversation is an act of respect. And a consciously consenting participant is much more likely to pay attention and cooperate than someone who feels pushed into an undefined conversation by the force of another person's talking. It's not universal, but to assume without asking that a person is available to talk may be interpreted by many people as lack of respect. When we begin conversation by respecting the wishes of the other, we start to generate some of the goodwill (trust that their wishes will be considered) needed for creative problem solving. I believe that the empathy we get will be more genuine and the agreements we reach will be more reliable if we give people a choice about talking with us.

You can use the Exploratory List of Conversational Intentions to expand the range of the conversations you feel comfortable starting.

As you become consciously familiar with various kinds of conversations, you will find it easier to:

- Invite someone to have one of a wide range of conversations, depending on your wants or needs.
- Agree to someone's conversational invitation.
- Say, "no." Decline an invitation from someone.
- When in doubt, gently prompt a person to clarify what kind of conversation she or he is trying to have with you.
- Avoid conversations that are negative, self-defeating or self-destructive.

On the following pages you will find a list of the most common conversational intentions. The exercise pages provide a place for you to make notes as you work with a practice partner and explore how it feels to start each of the conversations on the list.

What kinds of conversations are easy for you to start?

What kinds seem difficult?

the culture of cruelty

Some common forms of interaction are "guaranteed" to make people unhappy.

FINDING YOUR VOICE IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS. Although few conversations are exactly alike, for the sake of exploration we can group most English conversations into approximately forty overlapping types of intention. I classify about thirty of these intents as fulfilling and about twelve as unfulfilling. The goal here is <u>not</u> to develop rigid logical categories, but instead to suggest many of the "flavors" of conversational intention that can be distinguished in everyday talking and listening (including exits and "time-outs"). The goal of presenting the list of fulfilling intentions is to help you feel empowered to start a wide range of new and more satisfying conversations. As you explore these lists feel free to add your own entries.

INTENTIONS WORTH AVOIDING. In order to be realistic I have included a second list that contains what I call unfulfilling conversational intentions. Here I have included motives such as to coerce, to deceive, to punish, to demean, etc. In our time TV, movies, popular music and books continually bombard us with ready-made examples of extraordinary sarcasm, cruelty and violence. So in the process of developing a positive personal style of interaction, we may have to struggle against what is almost a cultural brainwashing in favor of violence and against cooperation, respect and kindness. There are many moral arguments about these matters and I leave it to you to decide the issues of morality. I would, however, like to point out two of the most serious pragmatic liabilities of the intent to harm others.

The first is that whatever we do to others, we teach others to do back to us, both in conversation and in life in general. This was brought home to me quite chillingly over a period of years, as I observed a stressed-out, single-mother friend of mine use sarcasm as a way of trying to discipline her ten-year-old son. The ten-year-old became a teenager who would speak to his mother with the same withering sarcasm she had used on him only a few years before.

Second, while the unfulfilling intentions and actions on the second list may provide some short-term satisfaction as one person expresses their bad feelings toward another, anyone who can possibly leave will not stay around to be coerced or demeaned. And if someone cannot leave, no one involved will be happy. These highly advertised and promoted <u>intentions to abuse</u> represent a kind of "Science of Misery." Do these twelve things and you can be certain that your relationships will end or turn bitter.

These considerations suggest that it is in our own best interest to make a careful self-inventory of our interaction styles and to explore more positive ways of interacting with the people around us.

Exercise: With your practice partner, try starting each of the conversations on the list. Note which feel easy to start and which feel more challenging. Begin with: **"Right now I'd like to..."** or **"I'd like to take about 1/5/30 minutes and..."**

	AN EXPLORATORY LIST OF <u>FULFILLING</u> CONVERSATIONAL INTENTIONS
1.	...tell you about my experiences/feelings...
	that involve no implied requests or complaints toward you
	so that you will understand the request, offer, complaint, etc. that I want to make
2.	...hear what's happening with you. (More specific: ...hear how you are doing with...)
3.	...entertain you with a story.
4.	...explore some possibilities concerning ...
	(requiring your empathy but not your advice or permission)
5.	...plan a course of action for myself (with your help or with you as listener/witness only)
6.	...coordinate/plan our actions together concerning...
7.	...express my affection for you (or appreciation of you concerning...)
8.	...express support for you as you cope with a difficult situation.
9.	...complain/make a request about something you have done (or said)
	(for better resolution of conflicts, translate complaints into requests)
10.	...confirm my understanding of the experience or position you just shared.
	.........(this usually continues with "I hear that you...," "Sounds like you...,"
	"So you're feeling kinda...," or "Let me see if I understand you...")
11.	...resolve a conflict that I have with you about...
12.	...negotiate or bargain with you about...
13.	...work with you to reach a decision about...
14.	...give you permission or consent to.../...get your permission or consent to...
15.	...give you some information about .../...get some information from you about...
16.	...give you some advice about .../...get some advice from you about...
17.	...give you directions, orders or work assignments.../ get directions or orders from you
18.	...make a request of you (for action, time, information, object, money, promise, etc.)
19.	...consent to (or refuse) a request you have made to me.
20.	...make an offer to you (for action, information, object, promise, etc.)
21.	...accept or decline an offer you have made to me.
22.	...persuade or motivate you to adopt (a particular) point of view.
23.	...persuade or motivate you to choose (a particular) course of action.
24.	...forgive you for... / ask for your forgiveness concerning...
25.	...make an apology to you about... / request an apology from you about...
26.	...offer an interpretation of... (what ... means to me) / ask for your interpretation of...
27.	...offer an evaluation of... (how good or bad I think ... is) / ask for your evaluation of...
28.	...change the subject of the conversation and talk about...
29.	...have some time to think things over.
30.	...leave/end this conversation so that I can...

Exercise: (to be explored in private or with a therapist) To what degree do you find yourself relying on these kinds of conversations to influence the people in your life? What possibilities do you see for change? To what degree are you the target of these behaviors? What possibilities do you see for change?

	AN EXPLORATORY LIST OF UNFULFILLING CONVERSATIONAL INTENTIONS
	(These conversational intentions and related actions are unfulfilling, at the very least, because we would not like someone to do these things to us. Yet if and when we do any of these things, we teach and encourage others to do them back to us and/or to avoid contact with us.)
1.	To lie, deceive or mislead (sometimes redeemed by good overall intentions, but usually not)
2.	To threaten
3.	To hurt or abuse
4.	To punish (creates resentment, avoidance and desire for revenge)
5.	To blame (focuses on past instead of present and future)
6.	To control or coerce (force, influence without consent)
7.	To manipulate (to influence someone without his or her knowledge and consent)
	To demean or shame ...to make someone look bad in eyes of others
8.	...to make people doubt themselves or feel bad about themselves
9.	To deny the existence of a problem in the face of evidence and appeals from others
10.	To hide what is important to me from you (if you are an important person in my life)
11.	To suppress or invalidate someone's emotional response to a given event or situation
12.	To withdraw from interaction in order to avoid the consequences of something I have done. (stonewalling)

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