

In I Only Say This Because I Love You, Tannen shows how important it is, in family talk, to learn to separate word meanings, or messages, from heart meanings, or.

Her mother, who is visiting, is helping out in the kitchen. As Elizabeth prepares the stuffing for the turkey, her mother remarks, "Oh, you put onions in the stuffing? Why do you have to criticize everything I do? It is the promise of someone who cares enough about you to protect you against the world of strangers who do not wish you well. Yet, by an odd and cruel twist, it is the family itself that often causes pain. Those we love are looking at us so close-up that they see all our blemishes--see them as if through a magnifying glass. Family members have innumerable opportunities to witness our faults and feel they have a right to point them out. Often their intention is to help us improve. They feel, as Donna did, "I only say it because I love you. Please start your shower at seven, not seven-thirty! At the same time, having experienced negative judgments in the past, we develop a sixth sense to sniff out criticism in almost anything a loved one says -- even an innocent question about ingredients in the stuffing. When we are children our family constitutes the world. When we grow up family members -- not only our spouses but also our grown-up children and adult sisters and brothers -- keep this larger-than-life aura. We overreact to their judgments because it feels as if they were handed down by the Supreme Court and are unassailable assessments of our value as human beings. Along with this heavy load of implications comes a dark resentment that a loved one is judging us at all -- and has such power to wound. The criticism of parents carries extra weight, even when children are adults. A woman from Thailand recalls that when she was in her late teens and early twenties, her mother frequently had talks with her in which she tried to set her daughter straight. But the one offering suggestions and judgments is usually focused on the caring. The daughter protested that her mother disapproved of everyone she dated. But as family members we also feel frustrated because comments we make in the spirit of caring are taken as criticizing. Both sentiments are explained by the double meaning of giving advice: Sorting out the ambiguous meanings of caring and criticizing is difficult because language works on two levels: Separating these levels -- and being aware of both -- is crucial to improving communication in the family. When Metamessages Hurt Because those closest to us have front-row seats to view our faults, we quickly react -- sometimes overreact -- to any hint of criticism. One scene, a conversation between the narrator and her adult daughter, Lily, shows how criticism can be the metronome providing the beat for the family theme song. The dialogue goes like this: Am I too critical of people? Mamma, why do you always have to find something wrong with me? In this brief exchange Richman captures the layers of meaning that can make the most well-intentioned comment or action a source of conflict and hurt among family members. Key to understanding why Lily finds the conversation so hard to follow -- and her mother so hard to talk to -- is separating messages from metamessages. The message is the meaning of the words and sentences spoken, what anyone with a dictionary and a grammar book could figure out. Two people in a conversation usually agree on what the message is. The metamessage is meaning that is not said -- at least not in so many words -- but that we glean from every aspect of context: Because they do not reside in the words themselves, meta-messages are hard to deal with. Yet they are often the source of both comfort and hurt. But her mother responded to what she perceived as the metamessage: This was probably based on experience: Her daughter had been critical of her in the past. If Lily had responded to the message alone, she would have answered, "No, not you. I was thinking of Brian. The message is the gift. But what made Lily angry was what she thought the gift implied:

Chapter 2 : I Only Say This Because I Love You - Video Dailymotion

Why does talk in families so often go in circles, leaving us tied up in knots? Talking to family members can be deeply comforting or deeply painful and problematic even when we're all adults.

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communication. She lodges a complaint: He asks, "French bread? Not even a question, just an observation. But on hearing it Debbie Reynolds turns on him, hands on hips, ready for battle: On the message level, no. He simply asked a question to confirm what type of bread she was preparing. But on the metamessage level, yes. If he were satisfied with her choice of bread, he would not comment, except perhaps to compliment. Still, you might ask, So what? So what if he prefers the dinner rolls she usually makes to French bread? Why is it such a big deal? The big deal is explained by her original complaint: She feels that he is always criticizing â€” always telling her to do things differently than she chose to do them. The big deal, in a larger sense, is a paradox of family: We depend on those closest to us to see our best side, and often they do. But because they are so close, they also see our worst side. You will never work things out if you continue to talk about the message â€” about French bread versus dinner rolls â€” rather than the metamessage â€” the implication that your partner is dissatisfied with everything you do. Divorce American Style was made in ; that it still rings true today is evidence of how common â€” and how recalcitrant â€” such conversational quagmires are. One way to approach a dilemma like this is to metacommunicate â€” to talk about ways of talking. Once they both understand this dynamic, they will come up with their own ideas about how to address it. For example, he might decide to preface his question with a disclaimer: They might also set a limit on how many actions of hers he can question in a day. The important thing is to talk about the metamessage she is reacting to: No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

Chapter 3 : 39 I Love You Poems for Him and Her - Saying I Love You

A very helpful book in figuring out how families communicate and miscommunicate. It covers all the bases, from how spouses talk past one another, to siblings vs. siblings, parents and children, adult children and parents, parents and teenagers, etc.

Chapter 4 : Book Excerpt: Deborah Tannen's "I Only Say This Because I Love You" - ABC News

In I Only Say This Because I Love You, Tannen shows how important it is, in family talk, to learn to separate word meanings, or messages, from heart meanings, or metamessages â€”unstated but powerful meanings that come from the history of our relationships and the way things are said.

Chapter 5 : I Love You Quotes - BrainyQuote

In 'I Only Say This Because I Love You' she explores ways in which choices of words and phrases affect the ways in which family members interact. The book shows how simple well-intended remarks.

Chapter 6 : 41 Quotes To Help You Say "I Love You" - Curated Quotes

Those Who Say Karachi Operation Is 70 Percent Successful For Them I Say Its Only 30 Percent-Mazhar Abbas He is Pushing facebook Owner Mark Zuckerberg Aside Because "Only Modi Know where is the Camera".

Chapter 7 : How to Say "I Love You": 13 Steps (with Pictures) - wikiHow

The author of "You Just Don't Understand" turns her eagle eye on the stinging, maddening, sneaky ways that family members communicate.

Chapter 8 : I Only Say This Because I Love You by Deborah Tannen | calendrierdelascience.com

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