

WORD PICTURES

Summary from book by Gary Smalley & John Trent entitled "The Language of Love". Chapter 17 has several pages of word picture examples to draw from. We highly recommend getting this book!!

An Emotional Word Picture is a communication tool that uses a story or object to activate simultaneously the emotions and intellect of a person. In so doing, it causes the person to experience our words, not just hear them.

Five Reasons Word Pictures Work so Effectively:

1) Word Pictures Have Been Time-Tested by the World's Greatest Communicators:

Example: Benjamin Franklin's personally penned epitaph:

"The body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer (like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out and stripped of its lettering and gilding), lies here, food for worms; but the work shall not be lost, for it will (as he believed) appear once more in a new and more elegant edition revised and corrected by the Author."

2. Word Pictures Grab and Direct Attention. Studies show that when we hear a word picture, our brain works faster and expends much more energy than while we're listening to conventional words or music.

3. Word Pictures Bring Communication to Life. Word pictures activate a person's emotions, which can lead to positive change. Studies have shown that word pictures not only activate our emotions, but they also physically affect us. That is, when we hear a story about either a real or imaginary event, our five senses are triggered almost as if we experience the event ourselves.

4. Word Pictures Lock Thoughts into Our Memory: Researchers have shown that people remember concepts and conversations far longer and much more vividly when a word picture is used. The more novel or bizarre the story or object, the longer the concept is remembered!

5. Word Pictures Provide a Gateway to Effective Communication. People have markedly different ways to thinking and talking. But emotional word pictures help people find common ground for communication.

7 Steps to Creating Emotional Word Pictures

1) Establish a Clear Purpose.

Do you want to:

Clarify thoughts and feelings?

Move to a deeper level of intimacy?

Praise or encourage someone?

Lovingly correct someone?

2) Carefully Study the Other Person's Interests. Research another person's past, and don't neglect the present. Discover what they enjoyed as a child; what they hate as an adult; the sports, hobbies, food, or music they prefer; the car they drive and how they keep it; what they do for recreation; and what