The Art of Silence

There is “a time to be silent and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7). Silence is truly an art that requires wisdom and discernment. Some of us find it easier to be quiet than to talk. All of us need to do both at the right times.

Silence shouldn’t be used:

- To punish or hurt.
- To manipulate someone into doing what you want.
- To avoid responding to someone’s truth.
- To avoid speaking the truth in love when it is right to do so.

Silence should be used when:

- Speaking up will result in futile arguing. You don’t want to argue with someone who is angry, intoxicated, exhausted, overwhelmed, emotionally reactive, or emotionally unstable.
- You will regret what you want to say.
- You will use sarcasm, ridicule, belittling, name calling, contempt, or any other weapon intended to inflict hurt and pain.
- It’s none of your business to comment. Remember to give people the dignity to figure things out for themselves.
- You are overwhelmed and will be emotionally reactive. In this case, it is best to pick a different time to speak.
- You can’t handle the other person having the last word. Try letting the person have the last word and not responding to whatever you want to argue about.
- You’ve already said it and it is now nagging.
- You’ve already said it and the person didn’t hear it and won’t hear it this time either. Why waste your energy and risk an argument when it won’t do any good?
Commit to developing the art of silence. I promise you that you will have less turmoil and more peace in your life and relationships.

By Karla Downing

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**Relationship Prayer**

God,

Give me discernment to use silence at the right times in my relationships. I desire peace in my spirit and in my relationships.

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**Relationship Challenge**

❖ Cultivate the art of knowing when to speak and when to be silent.

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**Scripture Meditation**

**Proverbs 17:28**

“Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.”

**Proverbs 26:4-5**

“Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.” (NIV)

It requires discipline and discernment to know when to speak and when to be silent.

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If you have any questions you would like to ask Karla, please feel free to email her at karla@changemyrelationship.com.

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