

HOW WE  
COMMUNICATE

# SAY WHAT?

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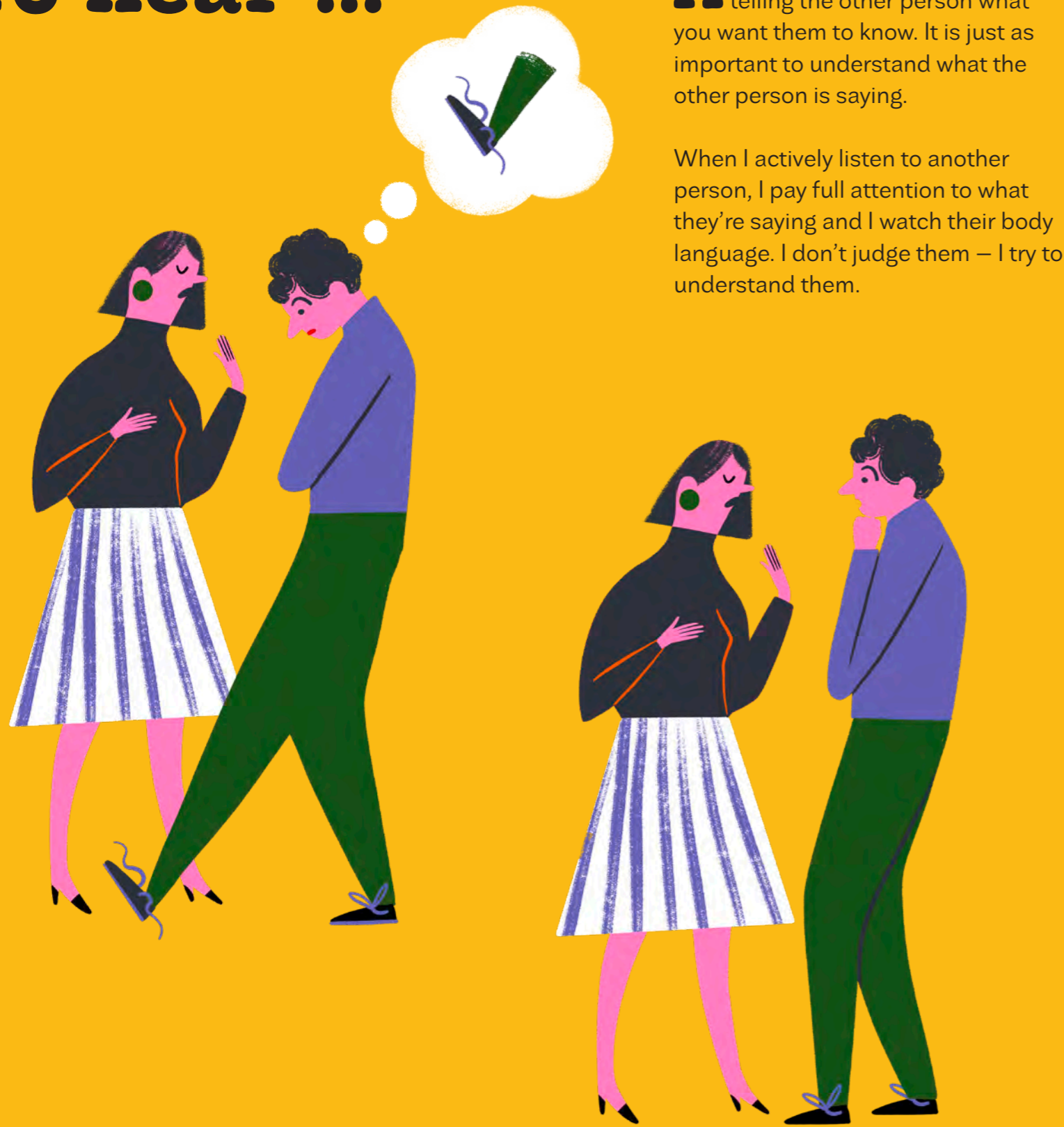




# To hear ...

**A** conversation is not just about telling the other person what you want them to know. It is just as important to understand what the other person is saying.

When I actively listen to another person, I pay full attention to what they're saying and I watch their body language. I don't judge them – I try to understand them.



# ... or to listen?

# Silence

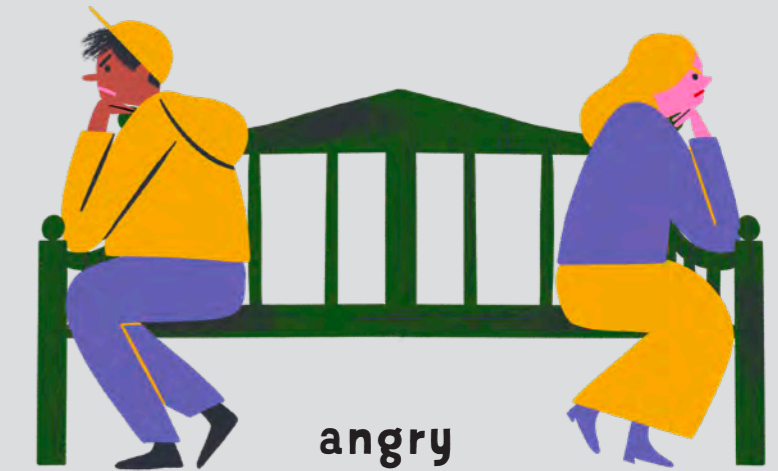
**S**ilence is an incredibly useful thing. Silence gives us time and silence also builds tension. Films and theater would not work without silence. But did you know that there are different kinds of silence?



silence when there is no need to speak



comforting silence



angry silence



awkward silence



silence that gives us time to think

# A story without words

**N**ow we know that silence plays an important role in communication. But how do we convey information without speaking?

In fact, speech is not the most important part of communication. More than half of a message consists of what we call **non-verbal communication** – the things we express with our posture, facial expressions, and gestures.

Non-verbal communication allows us to understand each other without words. We all know how to do it. Let's see if you can describe what is happening in the following story.

If we needed words to communicate, we wouldn't be able to perform pantomime!



# Posture

**E**ven from a ways off, we can tell how a person is feeling, just by looking at the way they are standing. Are they standing straight up or are they slouching? Are their arms folded? Where are they looking – up or down? Our posture can convey many different feelings.

I find you interesting.



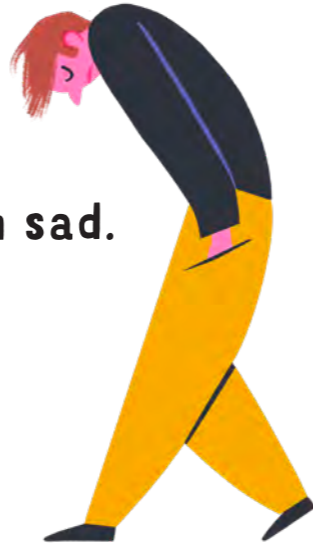
I'm happy.



I'm offended.



I'm sad.



I'm angry.



I'm having a good time.



I don't want to be noticed.

I'm nervous.



# Our distance from another person

It is not only the way we stand that is important, but also how far away we stand from a person. It's no coincidence that we sometimes use the phrase "letting somebody get close to us." We tend to let our loved ones get closer to us than people we meet for the first time.



# Different people, different distances

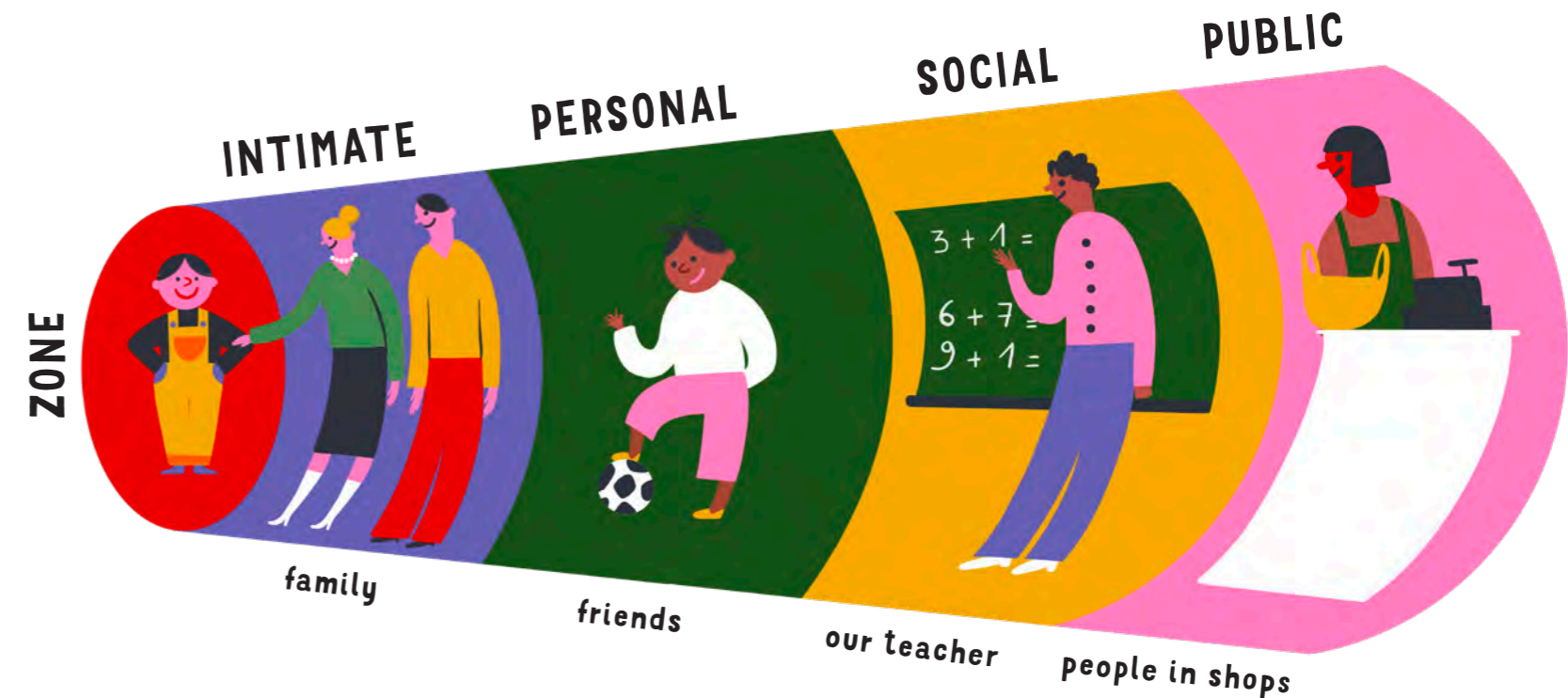
We all have our own **zone of personal space**. This is how close to us we allow others to come.

Each person's zone of personal space is different, and there's nothing wrong with that. It can look like this:

When a person enters our personal space and it makes us feel uncomfortable, it's okay to say:



That's a little too close for me. Could you move back a bit.



# Crying



**S**ometimes we think of crying as something bad. But, in fact, it is extremely useful, as is laughter.

The tears we get when we cry are different than those we get when, for example, we poke ourselves in the eye. These emotional tears help us release the strong emotions that we're experiencing.

Crying plays an important role in communication. It lets others know that something out of the ordinary is happening.

We often feel relieved when we've had a really good cry.

# Laughing



**D**id you know that laughter is contagious? If your friend starts laughing, you probably won't be able to keep a straight face for long.

Our laughter is much closer to the sounds made by other animals than to human speech, which is more complex and evolved later.

Laughter helps strengthen relationships and improves our health and mood.

Although we all laugh differently, the process is the same for all of us. We make repeated short sounds that come from air being expelled from our body.

# We all need to communicate

**N**ow you know that we communicate with the people around us in many different ways. But can you imagine what it's like to not be around other people and to have no contact with them? This was the experience of a girl named Helen Keller.



In 1870, in Alabama, a healthy little girl was born named Helen.



With empathy and incredible patience, Anne explained to Helen that all things had names. She taught her the letters of the alphabet by touching the palm of her hand.



Helen learned to read Braille and even to speak. When she placed her hand on another person's face, she could make out the movements of their mouth and understand what they were saying.

Helen was just 19 months old when she caught an infection. Although she recovered, she lost her sight and hearing as a result of the illness.



With Anne's help, Helen became the first deaf-blind person to graduate from university. She learned foreign languages and studied literature, history, and mathematics.



Helen wrote books and magazine articles and gave lectures advocating for the visually impaired, fighting racism, and struggling for women's equality.

Because Helen couldn't hear other people speaking, she didn't learn to speak herself. She was cut off from all people, with no way of communicating other than touch. Her whole world was dark and silent.



Helen became an unruly child. She knew that other people communicated with each other in ways she didn't understand. She often had fits of rage and hurt other people.



One day, a young teacher named Anne Sullivan came to join the family. Helen later remembered this meeting as the most important day of her life.



Anne remained with Helen until she died. Throughout her life, she had helped Helen to understand the world around her.







**W**hat do speech, written messages, posture, and facial expressions have in common? They are all ways we communicate with each other. But that's not the half of it. Nowadays a lot of communication is done with different kinds of technology. Come learn the secrets of communication and start practicing the skills that will help you improve your relationships with those around you.



**Whether you  
are the life of  
the party ...**

**... or more of  
a shrinking  
violet ...**



**... this book  
is for you!**

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