ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION

1. ORDERING, DIRECTING, COMMANDING
   Telling others to do something; giving orders or commands.
   *Hidden Message*: “I have power that you don’t have.”

2. WARNING, THREATENING, PROMISING
   Telling others what consequences will occur if they do something.
   *Hidden Message*: “I have the authority to reward or punish you.”

3. MORALIZING, PREACHING, SHOULDs AND OUGHTs
   Telling others what they “should” or “ought” to do according to your own standards.
   *Hidden Message*: “I have answers or solutions to all your problems.”

4. ADVISING, GIVING SOLUTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS
   Telling others how to solve a problem; giving advice, suggestions, answers or solutions.
   *Hidden Message*: “You’re too dumb to figure this out, so I’ll tell you what to do.”

5. JUDGING, CRITICIZING, BLAMING, STEREOTYPING
   Making negative judgments or evaluations of others; making them feel foolish; putting them into categories; shaming them.
   *Hidden Message*: “There’s something wrong with you.”

6. INTERPRETING, ANALYZING, DIAGNOSING
   Telling others what their motives are; analyzing why they are doing or saying something.
   *Hidden Message*: “I have you all figured out.”

7. SMOKE-SCREENING, CONDESCENDING, PATRONIZING
   Trying to avoid the problem; distracting or pushing the problem aside; trying to talk others out of their feelings or make their feelings go away.
   *Hidden Message*: “It’s too risky to deal with you.”

IN CONTRAST: DOOR-OPENERS

*Invitations to say more:*
“Tell me about it.” “I’d like to hear what you’re thinking.”
“I’m interested in what you have to say.” “Let’s discuss it some more.”