



Transforming Your Challenging Conversations

UNDERSTANDING & TRANSFORMING ATTACKS WEBINAR #8

PRESENTED BY

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SAVI® - SYSTEM FOR ANALYZING VERBAL INTERACTION

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Verbal Attack Spotting Awareness Exercise

Is it a Verbal Attack? Not a Verbal Attack? A different behavior?

#	Sentence	Behavior
1	You keep refusing to take responsibility for your mistakes.	
2	Your sales record has declined for three consecutive months.	
3	You're going to regret that comment, sir!	
4	I'm furious with you!	
5	If you make any more suggestive comments about my figure, I'm going to file an official complaint.	
6	That idea is completely impractical.	
7	I refuse to tolerate your childish disrespect for my authority.	
8	The simple fact is that your greed blinded you to the obvious risks you were facing.	
9	Do you REALLY like that dress?	
10	I feel that you've betrayed me.	

Attack Strategy Practice: Transforming Attack Behaviors

Goal: This activity helps us understand what's underneath the impulse to verbally attack someone else and provides a strategy to transform your attack into a more direct feeling communication.

Attacks vent out strong feelings, expressing outrage and indignation at other people or things. They may take the form of accusations and blame as well as name-calling, put-downs, threats and profanity. This Red-Light behavior increases the stress in both the speaker and the listener, making it more likely that both will continue using fight behaviors.

Attacks can be communicated quietly as subtle comments with a hostile edge or overtly and loudly as blaming statements. These behaviors also communicate important information about how the person is feeling, although the information gets lost in the noise.

The Strategy allows you to find your true feelings by decoding your attacks. You can then use this information to create a more productive communication. This is often more effective if done with another person you feel comfortable with.

Strategy for Transforming your Attack

Step 1: Identify the situation and the attack with the words you want to say.

Step 2: Identify all the feelings you experience as you have the impulse to attack.

Step 3: The next step is to rate each of those feelings, on a scale from 1 to 5; 1 is you don't feel that emotion at all right now, and 5 is you feel it as strongly as you've ever felt it.

Step 4: The next step is setting a goal for a conversation. The goal has to be productive, so it's important to avoid any goals that involve making the other person wrong or change. It's best to aim for something that you yourself can take responsibility for, or that you can both work toward together

Step 5: Is there any other goal you have for yourself or for you and the other person?

Step 6: The final step is coming up with the words you'd want to say to express yourself without attacking the other person.

Here is a list of some of the most common feelings underlying attacks, as well as some common blameful words that may get mistaken for feelings.

**Common feeling words
(what you feel or experience):**

Agitated, Alarmed, Angry, Anguished, Annoyed, Anxious, Ashamed, Bitter, Bored, Cranky, Dejected, Disappointed, Discouraged, Dismayed, Embarrassed, Enraged, Frustrated, Furious, Grouchy, Hopeless, Irritated, Jealous, Lonely, Nervous, Overwhelmed, Powerless, Resentful, Sad, Scared, Tense, Terrified, Uncomfortable, Uneasy, Worried

**Common words that carry blameful judgements
(what you think someone else did to you):**

Abandoned, Betrayed, Cheated, Criticized, Disrespected, Ignored, Insulted, Rejected, Put down, Used, Violated, Deserted, Neglected, Humiliated

Webinar Series Developers

Anita Simon, Amy Yeager, Cunera Van Hal, and Ben Benjamin developed this webinar series. Anita Simon is the co-creator of SAVI along with Yvonne Agazarian. Ben and Amy are certified SAVI trainers in the United States and worked together for 10 years. Cunera is a certified SAVI Trainer and teaches SAVI in the Netherlands.

Your presenters today are Ben Benjamin and Michelle Lynskey.

Ben Benjamin PhD has been teaching and training communications skills since 1982. He had his first SAVI experience in 1998. With his enthusiasm, he went on to help develop the SAVI Training Program and certification track with Anita Simon, Claudia Byram and Fran Carter. He became the first Certified SAVI Trainer in 2002. He co-authored *Conversation Transformations* with Anita Simon and Amy Yeager in 2012. Ben is now a Senior Certified SAVI Trainer. He has developed, implemented, and taught SAVI trainings across health care, corporate, educational, and non-profit organizational settings both nationally and internationally and uses SAVI in his executive coaching practice.

Michelle Lynskey is a Senior Executive Coach with Vector Group Consulting, a coaching and consulting firm based in Philadelphia. Her insight into people and organizations are grounded in over 25 years' experience in coaching and organization development consulting. She has studied Systems Centered Training extensively with the Systems Centered Training and Research Institute and is a certified SAVI trainer. She received her Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Rice University and has two daughters, both of whom live in Texas. Her hobbies include music, dance, photography, and talking with people about emotional intelligence.

How to Continue Your Learning About Attacks

- Attack awareness quiz:
CTSAVI.com/Aquiz
- SAVI Coding Challenge:
CTSAVI.com/coding
- Attend a live or online SAVI® training:
CTSAVI.com/open
- Practice the Strategy
- *Conversation Transformation* (Chapter 8)
- Online exercises:
CTSAVI.com/Aexercises