

The Power of Persuasion without Manipulation Episode #211

I was talking with my friend, Chris Ducker, recently about persuasion, copywriting, marketing and we got on the subject of manipulation and what that really means. Is it really bad? Some people say if you're manipulating people for their good than it's okay. I actually don't believe so, and I believe the difference lies in the distinction between internal and external pressure.

We'll also discuss the issue of positioning vs. promotion for Christians. I talked about this on my faith Friday show, so I'm going to explore a little more in today's episode, because it's applicable to everybody not just Christian believer. I'll explain why, what to do about it and how to handle it.

Plus, I want to talk to you about one of the most important live events you should attend this year and why I think it's important for you to be there.

We'll get into all that and more in this week's edition of the Ray Edwards Show.

Spiritual Foundations

Manipulation vs. persuasion is today's topic and the issue we're discussing for Christians and people who just want to be good people. In fact, is it okay to be self-promotional? That's a question worth exploring.

I would start by asking you what I asked on Friday's broadcast which is, how does it feel to you when you encounter someone who is overly self-promotional? Does it feel good to be around somebody who's like that? My guess is, your answer to that question is no it does not feel okay it feels kind of gross. So even if you're not a believer or person of faith, this issue of being too self-promotional is important because it turns people off.

I think it's indicative of something inside you that has gone awry, something that's gone wrong.

What I shared on Friday I'll recap quickly here and that is five keys that we learned from the life of Joseph, in the Bible. If you're not into this than take it as a good moral lesson. I happen to believe the Bible is true in every sense of the word, but you don't have to in order to benefit from this.

Joseph was a young man who was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. He rose to a position of power in Egypt and saved his family during the time of famine. The lessons we learn from his life are many, but I'll just give you the five that I think are important to us today, especially when it comes to trying to figure out, am I being too self-promotional or am I letting my gifts bring me into my place in society on their own?

What does that mean about marketing and advertising? Is marketing and advertising self-promotion? I don't believe it is.

1. Just because God reveals your great destiny to you, doesn't mean you necessarily need to share it with everybody.

In other words, you may know deep inside that you have something great within you and you're going to do great things, but if you go around telling people how great and fantastic you are, you might be met with a less than enthusiastic response. People may not say it to your face, but they'll certainly talk about it behind your back. So be careful what you say and that you don't become a braggart or egomaniac or narcissist.

(Quick note: if you're interested and want to read the story for yourself, look in Genesis 37)

2. Promotion flows through God's presence.

Every time Joseph achieved a big leap of favor and success in his story it's followed by this statement. Because the Lord was with him. Because God was with him. Even Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, recognized this. Remember, if you're a believer today that God has promised to dwell inside you and that He has said I am always with you and I will never leave you or forsake you.

So you have more of an advantage than Joseph had, because in his case God was with him and in your case God is in you.

3. Sometimes promotion lies on the other side of adversity.

Joseph went through some great adversity. He was almost murdered by his brothers, which means they hated him. That's adversity in and of itself. They almost killed him. Then they sold him into slavery. The people that bought him took him to the marketplace where he was then bought by an Egyptian and put to work in the Egyptian's house, in a culture that violated every moral and theological principle that Joseph stood for.

Then he was falsely accused and thrown into prison for years. When he got out of prison he rose to be second in power in the entire land of Egypt. He was reunited with his family, ended up saving their lives and he and his family were richly blessed by God as a result.

The question that comes up, in fact, one of my good friends heard Friday's episode and sent me a text, because this is an important question that's raised by people a lot. (*text: Ray, if Joseph hadn't told his brothers and parents about his dreams of the future. God had given Joseph big visions of his life and Joseph blabbed to everybody and I suggested maybe that wasn't a good idea. My friend says, would they have come true? I feel that God did expect that he would tell them about it. I replied to say, God knew what he would do, but I do not believe that was the best plan available to Joseph.*)

I don't believe God is a Heavenly child abuser who can only accomplish His purposes by putting His creations through suffering and hardship. I believe He has a better plan for us. Our choices, free though we are to make them, do have consequences. They may not thwart the sovereign will of God, but they certainly can make the accomplishment of this sovereign will either easier or more difficult for us.

Then I had a moment where I realized that some people would be shocked by me saying we can thwart or prevail against the will of God, so I went on to tell my friend the Scripture says, *God is not willing that any should perish, yet every day so many do through their own choice.* So clearly there are things that happen that are not His will, because He has given us freedom. We have more power than we believe.

So I don't believe it was necessary for Joseph to go through all adversity, but he did because of choices he made and sometimes we go through adversity because of choices other people make that we didn't have any power to control or be part of and sometimes stuff just happens. The

question is, never are we going through adversity the question is, how do we respond in the adversity?

4. Our promotion is always for the purpose of glorifying God.

If you're not a believer than this part may be lost on you. But if you believe in God and believe that He has a purpose in creating the world and in creating you, you know that the underlying purpose of all those things is to glorify Him, to demonstrate His goodness and that's not because He's an egomaniac it's because it's in our best interest for Him to be glorified.

As John Piper says, 'God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.'

5. God will promote you only when it won't destroy you.

You might attain promotion and riches and wealth and favor when God isn't bestowing it upon you. He may allow it for you but maybe it wasn't His plan, but He will never pour out His favor on you if it will destroy you, He will wait until you are ready, until you are tempered and ready to handle the weight of success.

So, whenever you get confused about the difference between marketing and self-promotion, remember these spiritual principles that are at the heart of the matter really. If you self-promote you're going to get in places you shouldn't be before you should be there.

Tip of the Week

This week I want to recommend to you a seminar/convention, if you will, that I think very seriously that you should consider attending. It's called Social Media Marketing World 2016. There will be 3000 marketers and social media pros in San Diego, California. You'll be meeting top people there like...

Guy Kawasaki
Jay Behr
Mike Stelzner
Chris Brogan

Amy Porterfield
Pat Flynn
Michael Hyatt
Ray Edwards

Michael Port
Cliff Ravenscraft
Dan Miller

They have a networking party every year and this year on board an aircraft carrier. It is truly amazing, something you have to see and participate in, to actually understand how marvelous it really is. It's so much fun. It's on the U.S.S. Midway.

There will be lots of learning sessions, including a copywriting for social media workshop, which is what I'll be teaching. There's a link in the show notes, if you go to RayEdwards.com/211 or you can click on the big button that you see in the sidebar of the website with my picture and the logo of the event. I hope you'll join us there.

I'll have a meetup of my folks, those who came because I invited them or recommended it or because you're part of my little community online. We'll have a get together time. I hope you'll join us for Social Media Marketing World 2016 in San Diego, in April.

Feature Presentation

How do you sell things without being salesy? It's a big question, it's an important one and I think there is a difference between manipulation and persuasion.

This has been much on my mind lately, as I just completed writing my new book called *How To Write Copy That Sells* which will be released shortly where you can get a copy of it. I'll be encouraging you to buy it because it's a really good book, not only because I wrote it but simply because it's good.

So this has been weighing on my mind a lot as I've been writing that book. I've been thinking it through and crystalizing my thoughts on this whole subject. In the real world it's not just a matter of opinion about what's pushy, hypey or salesy, in the real world it's a matter of emotion. It's not intellectual knowledge it's a feeling we have inside. We know when we're being manipulated or pushed and if you're the one doing the manipulating or pushing, you might get instant results but you won't get long-term success.

When people in the real world talk about, well, I think that salesperson was pushy or that ad feels pushy to me, what they're really saying is it's manipulative. I feel manipulated, tricked or trapped. As I explained to Chris Ducker on his Youpreneur.FM podcast last week, it really comes down to the difference between internal and external pressure.

- External pressure is when we are being pushed from the outside to do something we don't really want to do.

We all know what that feels like. We've all had it done to us, like at the car lot or when the telemarketer calls, or when the salesperson has their foot in the door and they're trying to sell us something at our house and we're being pressured and preyed upon, manipulated and it's external pressure pushing us to do something we don't really want to do.

- Internal pressure doesn't feel bad like that. Internal pressure may cause some discontent, but it's when we want something so much that we feel like we have to buy it.

Internal pressure answers the need I have in my life. It relieves the pain I have. I believe it'll help me in my business or I just like the way I look in those clothes, I have to have them or, I like the way I look in that car, I have to have it. That's internal pressure that comes from inside of us.

That is the crux of the entire matter. If you have to exert external pressure on people to get them to buy your product or service, then you need to re-examine your product or service first to see if it's valuable or not. Because often, applying external pressure, being manipulative or pushy comes from a place of not having a valuable product.

Also, quite often, people are manipulative and pushy and exerting external pressure on their customers when they don't have to. They have a good product they just don't know how to communicate in a wholesome ethical way.

- Persuasion leads me to a decision in my best interest for my reasons.
- Manipulation leads me to a decision that is in your best interest, for your reasons and not for mine.

So the question is, is there a non-manipulative model for marketing and selling? The answer is yes. I would suggest to you that you use the process that I call ethics. I'm not just talking about the word, I'm talking about the acronym.

If you use your ethics you'll be able to market in a non-manipulative way. Here's what the letters stand for and this is how the process works.

Educate – first you need to educate yourself about your clients and customers.

You want to know what their needs are, what their pains points are and how you can help solve their problems, what their world is like and then you educate your clients. Educate them on the fact that you understand their pain. You understand the problems that they face. You understand what their needs are and you understand a solution that will work for them.

Think – first you think for them.

Because, if people are experiencing a problem, let's say it's a problem with their fitness level if you're a fitness coach. Maybe it's a problem with their life or career if you're a life coach or a counselor. Perhaps it's a problem with their finances if they have those out of control and they're in debt. First you think for them and ask yourself...

- Why do they have these problems?
- What is at the root of the problem?
- What is the pain the problem causes?
- Where will the problem take them if they don't solve it?
- If they live in denial as so many people do, where will they ultimately end up in regards to and as a result of this problem?

After you've thought for them then you think through them. You lead them through this process of thinking through the problem and the consequences of the problem. In other words you move to the next letter.

Help – help them see the problem clearly.

Here's a startling fact, most people don't see the problem clearly because they want to be in denial about it. They don't want to or they haven't yet told themselves the truth about what the problem is, about what the root of the problem is, about how they got into it, about what it will take to solve it and about what will be the cost of not solving it? You must help them understand

the consequences of not taking actions or continuing to take the wrong action.

Investigate – along with your potential customer, with integrity you investigate to see if and how you can help them.

In order to do this you have to spend time learning about their possible hang-ups, psychological difficulties, points of pain and discomfort, their fears, frustrations and anxieties and you have to investigate what has stopped them from solving the problem before. I'm talking as if you're having a face-to-face selling encounter with these people.

For many of you that is exactly what will be happening, but for some, perhaps just as many, you'll be selling online or through advertising or marketing programs and you won't be face-to-face with the customer, so you may ask, how can I investigate with them if I'm not actually talking with them? You simply articulate the thinking and investigating process you've gone through with other customers and clients or on your own and you write that down or record it and you communicate it to them persuasively.

This is what selling really is.

Choice – this is where you honestly and openly, with integrity, present them with their choices.

By the way, their choices include no, I'm not going to buy from you and no, I'm not going to do anything about this. We may not like it that people have those options. We may not like it that those are legitimate choices for them to make and maybe they're a mistake, maybe they're going to result in more pain or a shorter life span or terrible financial problems later on or bad relationship problems, but that isn't our decision to make it's their decision.

Our decision as ethical persuaders is to show people how to make a decision that we believe is in their best interest for their reasons and then to bring them to a crossroads moment where they have a choice to make. It is not our responsibility to make that decision for them. As has been said, we are responsible to them we are not responsible for them. Once we have communicated the problem, the consequences and the solution to them, and once we've articulated the choice they have to make, it's up to them whether to believe us and act on that knowledge or not.

So, their one choice might be I'm not going to do anything I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing. And we may ask them, do you understand what the consequences of doing that are? They're probably going to answer yes or well, I hear what you're telling me but I don't believe you. There's little you can do about that. Their other choice is to try something different, either with or without you.

So a legitimate answer might be, I'm going to do something different than I've been doing. I'm not going to do nothing, but I'm not going to do what you're recommending I'm going to go a different direction. You can reason with them and present your case, ultimately they're going to decide whatever they believe is in their best interest and you need to be okay with letting them do that.

Hear me. I'm not saying that you're not passionately pursuing a persuasive argument that ends up with them deciding to do what you believe they should do, because you honestly believe it's in their best interest. Pursue that with passion. But, when there comes a point when they say no, I'm not doing that I'm doing another course of action and I know you don't like it but that's my choice. Then we have enough respect for people to say, I get that and I respect the fact that you've made a decision.

So I believe our job as salespeople, persuaders, marketers or advertisers is to get people to make a decision, the decision that they believe is in their best interest. It is not our job to decide what that decision is going to be for them, because we really can't. We can manipulate and push them into saying yes, even though they don't want to but usually the sale will not stick. Certainly, it will not leave them with good feelings about us and probably it will mean they will never do business with us again and neither will any of their friends, because they'll share with their friends, that guy's pushy. He manipulated me into buying something I didn't want.

Seal the deal or send them on their way – don't live in the limbo of no man's land, either for yourself or for them.

Don't settle for the, I'll think about it, I'll be back, check back with me every three months for the next three years maybe I'll say yes. Don't bother with that. Once you've made your case, either seal the deal or send them on their way with your blessing. You could stay friends, it doesn't mean you never talk again. It doesn't mean you don't market to them.

It doesn't mean they may not receive your autoresponders or email newsletter or they may not come to your webinars or they may not listen to your podcast, maybe they will, but you aren't going to go chasing after their business. You're letting them have the freedom that God gave them to make the decisions that they want, whether those decisions are in their best interest or not. So I truly encourage you to seal the deal or send them on their way and do so with clarity of emotion, with no underlying resentment or anger, bitterness or denigrating statements about that person being stupid they made the wrong decision. They made a decision and that's more than most people make. So give them credit for being a decision maker.

So, I believe you can be persuasive without being manipulative, if you just use your ethics.

- Educate
- Think
- Help
- Investigate
- Choice
- Seal the deal or send them on their way

Those are your ethics. Use them. You might ask, what's the best way to use this on a practical level? How do I put this to work in my day-to-day work or business?

1. I suggest you keep this framework in front of you, you'll find it written in the show notes.
2. Write out what parts of your selling processes are not ethics driven and don't incorporate this framework.
3. Consider changing your approach so that it does.

All right, you can find the show notes for this episode, including a transcript by going to RayEdwards.com/211.

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Persuasion leads me to a decision that is in my best interest for my reasons.

Manipulation leads me to a decision that is in your best interest, for your reasons.

Don't be a manipulator.

Until next time, may God continue to bless you and do more for you than you can ask more even than you can possibly imagine. See you next time. Peace to your house.

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