

🎧 Episode 99

Communicating as a SAGE LEADER

with
Angie Alexander

<https://talkabouttalk.com/99-sage-leader>



Are you a Sage Leader? Sage leaders are inclusive, they are mentally fit, and they listen. Learn how to communicate as a sage leader from executive coach Angie Alexander.



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SUMMARY: Three Key Communication Skills of Sage Leaders

Sage Leaders Listen

- **Sage leaders are curious.** They have a growth mindset. They have an openness.
- **Sage leaders ask questions,** genuine questions that they are genuinely curious about.
- **Sage leaders are vulnerable.** Vulnerable in terms of genuine curiosity, and vulnerable in terms of sharing. Angie suggests being transparent – at least 10% outside of your comfort zone.
- **Sage leaders talk less and listen more.**



Image from Canva

Sage Leaders are Inclusive

- **Sage leaders say “WE” and “US,”** as opposed to the “I” and “YOU.”
- **Sage leaders are empathetic.** For example, they don’t assume that everyone sees things through the same lens. They employ multiple media to facilitate different communication styles, and different ways of internalising and learning information.

- **Sage leaders create a psychologically safe environment** where it is safe to share a unique or distinct perspective.



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Sage Leaders Develop Their Mental Fitness

- **Sage leaders focus on their inner essence**, their true self, their sage. That sage who listens, who ask questions, who's inclusive, who's empathetic and who creates an environment of psychological safety.
- **Sage leaders also work hard to recognize their saboteurs**, their judge, the impostor syndrome, the crow on your shoulder, the voice in your head. Mental fitness is about. Acknowledging their saboteur and learning to excel.

RESOURCES

Angie Meyers

- LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/angie-alexander-yyc/>
- Instagram @sagecoachangie
- Clubhouse @angieayyc - weekly Mental Fitness & Sage Leadership room in the Thought Leadership Branding Club - Thursday at 8amMST, 10amEST



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TRANSCRIPT

I have another Q for you. I know I've been asking you a lot of questions lately, but here's a new one. Are you a sage leader? Do you even know what a sage leader is?

When I first heard the term Sage leader, I thought. I know it's a good thing, but I'm not quite sure what it is or what a sage leader does. Well, That's exactly why we're here right now. In the next 30 minutes. You're going to learn not only what a sage leader is, but how you can communicate like a sage leader. Let's do this.

Welcome to Talk About Talk episode #99, (YES 99!) where we're focusing on communicating as a sage leader. In this episode, you're going to hear from Executive coach Angie Alexander, who coaches executives on Sage leadership. at the end of this episode. I'm going to summarize with three things that you can keep in mind that you can start doing right now to ensure ensure that you are communicating as a stage leader. Are you ready? p

Before I go any further, let me introduce myself. My name is Dr. Andrea Wojnicki (please call me Andrea!). I'm the founder of Talk About Talk, and I'm your communication coach.

If you're an ambitious executive with a growth mindset, looking to advance your career, then you're in the right place. At Talk About Talk, we focus on communication skills topics like storytelling, confidence, networking, and yes, communication skills for leaders. These are the skills that will take you from a strong B+ in your career to an A+. And if you check out the TalkAboutTalk.com website, you'll find online courses, corporate workshops, 1-on-1 coaching with me, the archive of this bi-weekly podcast, and the free weekly communication-skills newsletter. I really hope you'll go to the website and sign up for the free weekly communication skills training newsletter.

So welcome to Talk About Talk episode number 99, focused on SAGE LEADERSHIP. I'm really excited to introduce you to my friend, executive coach Angie Alexander. Who focuses? Her coaching. On helping executives become sage leaders. Gosh, that sounds like something I'd like to become. I don't know about you.

Let's get into it. I'm going to, briefly introduce Angie. Then we'll get straight into the interview and at the end, as always, I'm going to summarize with key learnings. So you can keep doing whatever you're doing. Whether you're going for a walk. Whether you're driving the car. Whether you're doing housework or whether you're just lying on the couch. There's no need to take notes 'cause I do that for you. You're welcome.

OK, let me introduce Angie Alexander. Angie is a Certified Mental Fitness Coach with skills in organizational effectiveness, facilitation, decision analysis, process design & improvement, change management and project management. She has a passion for bringing teams together to work more effectively, make better decisions, be more innovative and think more strategically. Angie's "people skills are her super power. But what makes Angie stand out is that she can also talk technical stuff too. She's a Professional Engineer with over 20 years experience in the Western Canadian oil & gas industry. And she earned her Engineering degree from McGill. Lately she's been coaching executives, many of whom are also engineers, and she also hosts a weekly Mental Fitness & Sage Leadership room in the Thought Leadership Branding Club on the ClubHouse app. If you want to check that out or connect with her, all her coordinates are in the shownotes for this episode. Today, we're fortunate to have her here to share her thoughts on communication skills for sage leaders.

INTERVIEW

(unedited)

Thank you so much, Angie for joining us here today to talk about communication skills for leaders.

Thanks for having me. I'm really excited to be here.

Me too. Okay. My first question for you is, what communication skills do you think set apart the most effective leaders versus less effective leaders?

You know, so many leaders think they're good communicators. Because they tell people stuff, right? They tell them. And I think effective leaders think a little bit about their audience, and they engage their audience, they engage their team, and it's not just about a tell, it's about listening. So leaders who are, are more empathetic and more vulnerable in their communication are, are better communicators, and they're more effective. And, you know, typically those that aren't great communicators. They're only thinking through their own lens of communication, they think that their communication style is the communication style, and that if I'm communicating this way, you're going to understand what I'm saying. And they're not necessarily appreciating the fact that we tend to hear through our own lens. And if my lens is different than your lens, it's not going to learn the same. So checking in. But it's really that that empathy and the understanding of others way of thinking their communication styles and meeting them versus just assuming that my communication style is the same as yours. And therefore you will completely understand what I'm saying.

I have to say, Angie, I love your answer. I have noticed, people generally when they think about communication, they think about projecting, right. Yeah, they they think about being

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the communicator means the person that's doing the talking. And here, here we are on the talk about talk podcast, but a big part of it. For really, truly effective communication is listening and the empathy and everything that you were talking about. So I just have to say, so insightful. It's not obvious, right?

Right.

And I don't know if you ever took psychology or any communication courses in university, but they talk about the encoder and the decoder. And if we're not talking about both of those that were missing half of the equation, so yeah, this is huge insight. It's fundamental. So you mentioned the term vulnerable, being vulnerable. So the best leaders, when they communicate, they are vulnerable? Can you extrapolate a little bit on that?

Yeah, I'm sure a few of the folks listening to us just had like, either throw up a little in your mouth, or, you know, a quiver or something that's like, There's no way. Vulnerability gets a bad rap, right? Like it, it's so often equated with weakness. And, you know, if I show any vulnerability, I'm weak. And that certainly shows up in leaders. You know, particularly, like I work in oil and gas, so it's a very old boys network kind of thing, lots of very male dominated. So for men to think about being vulnerable is or women in leadership in those in those roles, or they see vulnerable, like, vulnerability is about sharing everything. Right. And I think it's finding that line between oversharing, which isn't really about being vulnerable. It's okay to say, this is what I'm working on, it's okay to say, I don't know the answer to that, but we're going to figure it out. together. I think a lot of times leaders are afraid if I say I don't know the answer, if I show that I'm uncomfortable, or I show that I'm scared, or whatever it is, that people aren't going to trust me to lead them and keep them safe. But the reality is, as soon as there's any chink in the armor, they're gonna be like, wait a second, what's going on. Whereas if you share a little bit of your flaws, I like to coach people in the group sessions that I do, I talk a lot about vulnerability in sharing and how it's contagious. So if you share a little bit, I'm more likely to share a little bit. As a coach, I'll share in that in that space. But I encourage people to share 10% outside their comfort zone, it's not about like, I'm comfortable here. And I'm asking you to share way out here, which is way outside your comfort zone. So let's not judge each other's vulnerability, but let's just know that that I'm stretching myself a little outside my own comfort zone, whatever that might look like. So for a leader who's never shared anything with their team about anything, for them to admit that they have a dog that they love to, you know, sit down on the couch and cuddle with might feel very vulnerable compared to the person who's always sharing about their pets. And now they're, they're sharing something else that's a little more vulnerable. So it's just showing a little piece of yourself to others.

I love your distinction between oversharing perhaps, in terms of transparency, and giving people an unfiltered view of every aspect of your life, right, there's that versus you reminded

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me of the term psychological safety. So I've been working with some clients and in terms of optimizing psychological safety in their organizations, and this relates to you said, leaders are supposed to imbue trust and make us feel safe. And safe to your point does not mean perfect.

there's so much around, like, and what is perfect mean? That means different things to each of us. But it's the fact that, you know, we can't control everything. So, you know, for a leader to be able to say, here's the things that we can't control. And these things, you know, like, sure this worries me a little bit, but here's what we can control. Right. So I think as a leader, we're not just saying Oh, hey, like, here's all the things that can go wrong. And here's what I'm worried about. But but then to take that and say, okay, we can do this together. Like, how empowering is that? When a leader says, I'm not sure that we know that, that I have the answer for that. But I know that as a group, we can do that, I know that as a team, we can do this together. But to be able to say, I will pull everyone together and give you the space that you need to do what you need to do, I think is is really, is really valuable.

10:49

So you're reminding me again, and I didn't see this coming when we were talking about this interview in advance. And, as you know, but I wasn't thinking about the overlap between this discussion and psychological safety. But one of the tenants of psychological safety is that it is one of those rare factors in leader in organizations, that is top down. So the leader has to create an environment and to demonstrate themselves cycle. A culture where you can be psychologically safe, where it is safe to be vulnerable to use the term that you just used right? To admit that you don't know everything to admit that you're afraid of something to put your hand up and say, I'm not sure the direction we're headed is right here, or have we considered like all these things, they scare people back to your safe point, right. So yeah, I love this. And the other thing I wanted to highlight was I think the other thing that you're talking about might be articulated in terms of a growth mindset. So yes, people that have a growth mindset, aren't afraid to say, I don't know. But let's find out. Because I want to learn to

12:09

Yeah, yeah, it's a curiosity. It's an openness. I don't know, but let's figure it out together. I love that. And I love that openness and curiosity. And it ties into something else that you and I have talked about the past is improv is that ability to start on a path, have a structure, have a bit of a plan, but be willing to adjust as we go. Let's embark on this journey together, knowing that we don't know what the outcome is going to be, but we're going to go in this direction.

So as I'm listening to you, sort of roleplay what you would say, if you were the leader, I keep hearing we and us as opposed to I and you. And of course I pay attention to words, words

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really matter. You and I keep hearing we you're very inclusive, and I can imagine that that would be very motivating. For employees, you know, the directors and the quote unquote, underlings to hear a manager say, I'm not sure how this is going to work. We're gonna need to figure this out. It's not I'm gonna figure this out and tell you what to do. It's not I do, it's we and us.

you know, that's a such a big part for me of leadership and the importance of, we're in this together. You know, I don't, I don't know, part of it, I think is I've never, you know, we I've probably dealt a lot with my own imposter syndrome. So I'm like, I can't do this by myself. But having moved out of that, and learning how to deal with that and tap into my own, my own superpowers, maybe as a as a leader is to realize that there is a lot of power in me. And that, you know, at some point, there's things I have to as a leader, I have to own and I have to take on, but giving the giving, being part of a team and being the leader of that team and inspiring that team to move forward. And you don't have to be the official leader to do that. People will rally around those that create that environment. Whether you're a leader on the org chart in the hierarchy or or not, we all have that and ability to to lead through that inspiration and vulnerability and create that we can we can do this together. environment.

That's a really great point, though, I just want to underline that, that when we say leaders, we don't mean the person with the status at the very top of the organization. We mean anyone who has the opportunity to demonstrate leadership at any level in the organization. So my next question for you, I think you may have answered this, to be honest. But if anything else comes to mind, the question is, what do you think are the most common or biggest communication mistakes that leaders make?

Yeah, I think not communicating. Right. So either assuming that everybody knows what they're thinking, by not communicating? That's, I think a big mistake is, you know, either you feel as a leader that, you know, I'm not going to burden people with this information. I don't have all the answers yet. So I'm not going to communicate. don't they just assume they're doing their jobs, they know that their note, no news is good news, all of those things fall into that bucket of not communicating enough. So if you are communicating as a leader, some of the mistakes, again, I think taking, taking the "I" stance instead of the "WE" stance can be can be a big, big issue that that sort of directive, communicating and not considering your audience. Who are you communicating to? What do they need to hear?

So interesting, though, because your answer to that question, I kept thinking, I've heard from other people, that I believe that this is true, that the frequency and the amount of information that's being shared by leaders actually should be amplified. When there is a crisis, like for example, the pandemic because people are working from their homes, there's a lot of uncertainty, right? People don't do well in, in uncertainty. So what should leaders be doing? They should be sharing more information more frequently. And to your last point, perhaps,

through multiple media, they shouldn't be checking in on Zoom meetings, they should be writing it right. They should be creating podcasts actually be creating videos like whatever it is going multimedia so that however, different people consume information, the best they can access it. So I think that's a great point. I agree. Great. So I know that you focus in your coaching business on sage leaders. Can you tell us what you mean by Sage? I am intrigued.

Yeah, I love that word. And it doesn't mean the plants. I do mental fitness coaching. And in our mental fitness coaching, we learn how to tap into our inner essence our true self and we call that our sage. If your your Sage is who you are and who you've been since you were a child. It's our ability to be empathetic. It's our ability to be calm and laser focused in our actions. It's that curiosity like that the true curiosity, right if I'm if I'm leading, if I'm a sage leader, and I'm asking you questions. I'm truly curious about that I really, I don't know the answer. And that's why I'm asking, help me understand what I'm missing. I might even lead with I, I think I know the answer to this question, or I have an idea what this might be. But I'm really curious to hear what your what am I missing in this situation? So being open to that, again, it's a vulnerability to say, I don't know where this is going to go. Right. But I'm going to ask the question. And for me, that's a sage leader is one who, who has that presence that creates that environment of safety and vulnerability. And you want to be with people who emanate a bit of that sort of wisdom and calm and peacefulness, but at the same time, create that safety. And they, they you know that when you're with them, that they're going to be listening to you so that that, you know, they know what you need from the situation. And they're listening to you. And you're part of the ongoing solution.

So, as you know, Angie, because I did pre issue to you a discussion outline, the next question that I was going to ask you is how does this relate to communication specifically, but I think you kind of answered that, right? You talked a lot about, yeah, asking questions, for example, and being vulnerable. And you really made me think of something that's off script. This is getting a little bit meta, but the best podcast interviewers that I've heard, or even interviewers that you hear on the radio, or maybe on the news is, are the interviewers that really listen to the answers that they're asking, and then ask the question that they know they're genuinely curious about opposed to the next question on the script. Right? Right. I don't know if you've ever listened to an interview where somebody answered answers a question. And then the interviewer asked them a question that is totally unrelated. And you're like, wow, they are following a script?

Yes. Totally. Yes, absolutely.

we're talking about this interview in terms of sage communication. It's a little bit different from being a sage leader, but I think if you want to be a sage interviewer, you need to truly listen to what the person is saying. And then ask the question that you're genuinely curious about. Right.

Right. Right. And, and isn't a podcaster or an interviewer a leader?

Well, perhaps a thought leader. Yeah, yes.

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, in the smallest sense, you're, you're leading the conversation. Right? It's, it's your conversation to lead but also creating that thought leadership. So yeah, sage, you could be a sage podcaster

I love that, too. So your description of a sage leader and a sage communicator also made me think about listening skills. There's not just two levels of listening, there's actually four. So one is you're not listening at all, then there's passive listening, which is kind of pretending and interjecting just to demonstrate that we might be interpreting some of what you're saying. And then there's active listening, which is being engaged in interacting on a more sort of authentic level. But then the ultimate level of listening is collaborative listening, where you're working with the other person, and this goes back to your "we" language, right? So you're actively working with the other person to come up with something that either one of you wouldn't have come up with, on your own. So do you agree that a sage leader and a sage communicator is really focused on collaborative listening?

I didn't know the term but I was thinking that there is something beyond active listening. For sure. Especially, I mean, maybe it's just how we coach people on active listening, because often it's repeat back what you heard. Yeah. And that's usually if somebody is doing that, and they're just saying, so what I heard you say, and they say, it's like, oh, I'm very good at like, repeating back exactly what I heard.

that's a great point. That is a great point. That's like demonstrating active listening, but it's not collaborative

love. Right. Right. And so it is beyond that. let's see where this goes together. Because we both have something valuable to add to the conversation.

So okay, so I think I may have a collaborative idea here based on Okay, good. Let's do it. I've been encouraging people, when they're in meetings, and these days, many of the meetings are online, and they receive, you know, an agenda. Here's what the agenda is, and here's what the meeting objective is. Encourage them to also write down on a sheet of paper or on their computer. I encourage them to write down what their personal objective is. So the meeting objective is for us to whatever update the critical path or update status on whatever whatever the make a decision, whatever the meeting objective is, and then ask themselves, what what's my personal objective here? It might be for example, to clearly communicate to everyone that unless certain timelines are met over the next week that we're going to miss

our, our launch. Or it might be that I want to demonstrate my expertise in something, right, for example, but I'm hearing that there may also be an opportunity to identify a team objective. Right, which might be different from what the actual meeting objective is. It's like the meeting objective is tactical, and maybe there's a higher level objective.

Yeah. As you were talking, I was thinking, like, the risk there is, if I go in with my own objective, I can be so focused on that objective, that I'm not necessarily listening, I'm looking for the opportunity to insert what it is that I'm trying to get across, right, I saw depends on the objective, I liked your objective around, you know, showing a little bit of my expertise, because then there's opportunities to, to show that but I think we have to be careful with that. Whereas if it's a team objective, there's like a, there's three levels to me if strategy objectives and your purpose, what any, anything like that, and it can start with my own purpose. I don't want to be part of a team unless I'm growing in some way I'm learning something, I'm moving in a certain direction. So So there's, you know, there's definitely always, why should I participate in this meeting? Unless I'm going to get something personally out of it? from a growth perspective? Then there's the team.

There's a whole other topic on meeting agendas. And I think we often were very tactical in our meeting agendas, and it's bullet points. And an easy adjustment to that is put it in the form of a question. Put your your meeting agenda point as a question. And even your overall objective, if you think about it in terms of a question, you go in immediately with curiosity, what are we trying to learn? What are we trying to get out of this? is, you know, do we have the right timeline for this particular launch? Do we have like, you know, versus checking in on the launch dates or something like that? Right.

So asking questions is, yeah, such an integral part of being a great listener? Yeah, right. Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. So I'm assuming now at this point, I mean, I'm aspiring to be a sage leader and a sage communicator, and I'm assuming all the listeners are fully bought in as well. The last question, before we get into the five rapid fire questions that I have is do you have any advice for how aspiring sage leaders can improve their skills as as an effective communicator and an effective leader?

Yeah. For me, all of this stuff starts with self. It's really it's about mental fitness, it's about being able to not give into imposter syndrome. I just read your newsletter, about the crow on your shoulder. I love that. So, yeah, that ties in a lot to, you know, in the work that I do, we call them saboteurs. But it's those voices in your head. And we often get people to try and name their, their judge, which is the is the main one and I can totally see the crow being a great archetype or, you know, visual of that Judge that's harping away at you all the time. So, as a sage leader, if you're aspiring to be a sage leader, you're working to turn those down, do the work to you know, improve your mental fitness, which does take it, you know, don't don't ask me to come and fix your team, right? It's not about fixing your team. It's about

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fixing you. And it's not even fixing, it's just, it's being stronger mentally, so that you can turn down your own inner voices and move them off to the side. So you can really allow that inner essence that sage to be present and to be leading the conversations more, because that creates this almost like this aura around you of stability and peace and, and an action like that action focus. It isn't flurry, it's okay, we're gonna hear everybody, and then we're gonna move forward. And it's, it's, it's easy, we move forward with ease and flow, when we're all in that in that place. And we've, I think many of us have experienced that when you've been in the presence of somebody who creates that environment. It doesn't feel hard. You know, we can make tough decisions, we can have tough conversations, because we're all in this together. And we know what we're trying to do and it in it. You know, we work through it together and we've we float forward. So do the work yourself is really the bottom line for for a sage to be a sage leader, you start with yourself.

So I feel like the conversations almost come full circle right at the very beginning, I asked you what communication skills set apart the most effective leaders and you talked about instead of telling, you're actually engaging, you're using we you're being vulnerable. And we talked about the psychological safety. And now you've added this really important insight that you can't be projecting this. Unless you've done the work yourself. You've personally gone deep in, like you said, your imposter syndrome. And if that crow is sitting on your shoulder telling you you can't do this, you got to show them that you're perfect. Back to what you said at the very beginning. You're not going to be able to demonstrate vulnerability. Beautiful Okay. Alright. So let's move on to the five rapid fire questions. Are you ready? Yes. Question number one. What are your pet peeves?

Yeah, great. It was a good question. Because originally like, I don't have any pet peeves. I've worked so much on my mental fitness. Nothing bothers me anymore, which is totally crap. It's not true. So I have two one we kind of talked about before we got on onto this call was about different noises. So for me, it's definitely like loud chewing or slurping drinks, or whatever I get. I get all about that. But then the other one that this is so funny, I used to play flag football in university. And whenever we watch football on TV, there's no I roll my eyes every time they marched out the little chains and measure to the eighth of an inch, the placement of the ball. And if you watch how the ball gets placed on the field in the first it's a total pet peeve of mine the accuracy is complete crap like

it after it's been put down, but who put it down?

they come marching out with the chains and measure it to like yeah, anyway, that is very silly. Yeah.

I love that. Yeah. Question number two, what type of learner are you?

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I would say mostly auditory. I, I, if I've heard stuff, I'm more likely to remember it. I definitely like to do things to learn stuff. I remember it that way. But auditory, for sure. Listen to a book listen to I had to go to class in university. I couldn't read somebody's notes or read a textbook. I had to hear it for myself.

So I'm not surprised you said that because I know you're very active on clubhouse
Question number three, introvert or extrovert?

I'm definitely on the introvert side, because I need to be by myself. But I'm a gregarious introvert. So I'm happy to talk. I enjoy talking to people. So I struggled when I was, or when I first started learning about it. And I came out as an introvert. And everyone's like, there's no way you're an introvert. You're so chatty, you get along with everybody and all that. I'm like, yeah, no, but I need to, like I move myself down into this room in the basement, so that I could be away from the noise of my husband. Because it's draining. It's draining. I like the I like the quiet.

Okay, question number four. Communication preference for personal conversations.

Yeah, as much as I love phone calls. The reality is, I'm a texter. You know, and, you know, texts, whether it's text or WhatsApp or something, and with my kids at Snapchat,

Okay, last question. Is there a podcast or a blog or an email newsletter that you find yourself recommending the most lately?

Yeah, the one lately is Adam Grants work life and has everything on rethinking. I just love that. It's that open and curiosity around rethinking things, constantly growth back to the growth mindset. Yeah.

You know what, I adore Adam Grant as well

Yeah.

Is there anything else you want to add Angie, about communication skills for leaders?

No, I think it's just remain curious and open and recognize that communication comes in different forms, and thinking about the different ways that people like to communicate, but really be open, be curious and listen, listen more and talk less.

Thank you so much for your time and for sharing your insights. Angie, it was a lot of fun. And I learned a lot. Thank you.

Thanks for having me.

CONCLUSION

Listen more and talk less. Did you catch that? Such great advice. But it's not easy, is it? Well, that's why not everyone around is a sage leader. It takes some effort.

Thanks again to Angie Alexander, for sharing her expertise.

Now, as promised, I'm going to summarize our conversation, but just briefly. I'm going to pull out three main themes that Angie shared with us.

Communicating as a sage leader means listening, being inclusive, and focusing on your own mental fitness. Got that? listening, being inclusive, and focusing on your own mental fitness.

Listen.

So the first thing they do. Is listen. They're curious. They have what we call a growth mindset. They have an openness and a curiosity. They ask questions. And whether they are leading a team or an organization. Or whether they're hosting a podcast, they ask genuine questions that they are genuinely curious about.

And Speaking of genuine curiosity, sage leaders are vulnerable. Yes, it's a cliché as Angie so aptly put it, some of you are probably going to throw up in their mouth a little because you're so tired of this cliché. Vulnerability gets a bad rap. But as Angie points out, vulnerability is an imperative for sage leaders. She encourages vulnerability in terms of genuine curiosity, and and in terms of sharing. Being transparent – at least 10% outside of your comfort zone. You know what? I think that's an interesting exercise. I'm going to try it.

The key point here though, in terms of listening, is that sage leaders talk less and they listen more.

Inclusive

The second key theme here is that SAGE leaders are inclusive. Simply put, this is about the WE and the US. As opposed to the I and YOU.

Inclusivity is also about being empathetic. Not assuming that everyone sees things through the same lens through which we see things.

This is why going multimedia, saying things, writing things, online and face to face - across media can be highly effective.

This is about considering different perspectives, different communication styles, and different ways of internalising and learning information. Being empathetic.

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Inclusivity is also related to psychological safety. Teams perform at their highest potential, they excel in psychologically safe environments. These environments only exist when the leader, a sage leader, creates an environment where it is safe to share a unique or distinct perspective. This sounds a lot like inclusivity, doesn't it? Considering different perspectives and different communication styles.

Mental Fitness

The third and last main theme here is about mental fitness. Sage leaders take responsibility for and focus on their own mental fitness. While the first two themes - listening and inclusivity - are really about being focused on others, mental fitness is about also turning that lens inward.

Angie talked about when she does mental fitness coaching, she does coaches her clients to tap into their inner essence. Their true self, that they call their sage. That sage who listens. Who ask questions. Who's inclusive. Who's empathetic and who creates an environment of psychological safety.

Sage leaders also work hard to recognize their saboteurs. Their judge. We're talking impostor syndrome. The crow on your shoulder, the voice in your head. So mental fitness is about acknowledging their saboteur and learning to excel.

And that's it! The three key communication skills of SAGE leaders that we learned from Angie Alexander and that we can all adopt right now, are, number one, listen #2 be inclusive and #3, focus on your own mental fitness.

Thank you again to Angie for sop generously sharing her suggestions and guidance. I don't know about you, but I'm inspired.

If you want to reach out to Angie or review the summary for this episode, please check out the shownotes on the talkabouttalk.com website. While youre there, I hope you'll sign up for my communication skills newsletter. It's like getting free communication skills training in your inbox, once per week. Sign up on the website or you can email me directly and I'll add you to the list.

Email me anytime at andrea@talkabouttalk.com. I love hearing from you – suggestions, feedback and ideas. Bring it on.

THANKS for LISTENING. Talk soon!



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