

Broken Communication

By Yvonne Ingram

Words that are not spoken
Communication is broken.
Lengthy pauses,
Sentences without clauses.

Atrophied ideas die inside
The cluttered brain, besides
When you refuse to speak
Your insights none can peek.

Your thoughts are your own,
Written out in a poem or a story
With no moral, without words
Not spoken, no one can quarrel.

Silence is golden,
Or so they say but even a horse
Whinnies for hay.
The Spring
Blossoms raise their heads
From winter ground
That is frozen and dead.
Nature cries out that the sun
Is once again going to run
Across the sky and because
Of the silence, I wonder why.

Your words are precious, though
They are withheld, the language
Spoken, not skilled but the music
You make when you speak
Brings a pattern to the surface
That breaks the golden words
Not spoken, the stillness, a token.

Dr. Wes' Adventures in irony:
Death and the bureaucratsBY DR. WES BROWNING
REAL CHANGE NEWS

The saying on the street is "There's no such thing as a free lunch." You have to sit through the sermon, at least. It also applies off the street. My experience with subsidized housing is that there is no such thing as a free subsidy, either.

People who live in subsidized housing live under rules and regulations that those who have never experienced them imagine only pertain to totalitarian states. I get a minimum of two invasions of my room every month. One for bug spray, one for "inspection." "You are not required to be present for this violation of your privacy." The rules for passing inspection are set by bureaucratic pinheaded suits who have never lived in a 200-square-foot studio apartment, or visited one, or know anyone who has. Therefore the rules are insane, as rules tend to be that are not based in any way on any knowledge of reality.

Therefore I'm always failing my "inspection" and required to be "re-inspected," at which time I must have corrected the cause of my "failure." So usually there are three invasions per month. Re-re-inspections are also possible.

Fortunately, at the re-inspection I can't fail anything I passed at the inspection. So, let's say I failed the inspection because the right side of the room was too cluttered. If the note says, "Your room failed inspection/ the right side was too cluttered/ please correct this for re-inspection on [Month/Day]," that means I can take all the junk on the right side and slide it to the left side. Now the left side is cluttered, but that's OK, because the left side passed previously. So sometimes the insanity works in my favor!

This month I have failed inspection because there isn't a three foot wide path from the entrance to my room to the window. The rule that I must have such a path, I've been told repeatedly, is based on

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the need of paramedics to get a gurney to my limp dying body when it's time for my last trip to Harborview before final discharge to my Eternal Studio in the Burning Pit of Hell. I will presently amuse myself by describing in print how bat spit insane the three-foot rule is.

First of all, the entrance to my room is itself 2 feet 10 inches wide. So if the gurney is three feet wide, it can't even get in the door. If they bring in a super-transformer-gurney that can tuck its sides in to get in the door, let the stupid thing tuck its sides in the rest of the way.

If they can't get to my limp dying body because my stuff is in the way, how did I get there? If I store stuff up near the window, that means I'm not going to be dying at the window. I'll be dying someplace I can get to. Do they think I'm going to climb over my stuff just before dying? What, just to make extra work for the paramedics? I don't think playing a lame practical joke on the paramedics is going to be a big priority when I'm choking on that pretzel.

If there's an earthquake and the building pancakes and I'm trapped in an air pocket with tons of rubble around me, am I going to be left to die on the grounds that a gurney can't be rolled up alongside me? For that matter, if inspection is at 3 p.m., and the earthquake was at 2:59 p.m., and I didn't clean up the mess by the time the inspectors arrive, did I fail?

Meanwhile, suppose you don't live in subsidized housing. Let's say you're a serial killer who likes to chop your victims up and saves the variety meats in a freezer in the basement of your own house. Lucky you, you don't get inspected monthly. It's your reward for pulling your own weight in society.

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