

Self Esteem and Purchasing Behavior **Part Two**

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G: Hi Sharon, honey.

S: Hi, honey.

G: Well, I want everybody to know that Sharon and I just did a terrific recording and went through the whole thing...

S: We did a terrific talk, we just didn't record it.

G: {chuckles} We thought it was recording and then we looked up at the computer screen and it was not recording.

S: It wasn't there.

G: Anyway, the reason that we wanted to do this was because a few weeks ago we recorded an audio about how self esteem was related to purchase behavior.

S: It was on laddering, specifically. We talked about laddering.

G: Uh-huh, laddering being.

S: A technique to get from a product feature to functional benefits and then to emotional end benefits. One of the things that I felt was missing from it was a good summation about the ultimate end benefits, which is self esteem and what we did a number of years ago, was come up with a paradigm. We call it the *Livingston Paradigm of Self Esteem*, which shows that there are four pillars of self-esteem. The reason for self esteem is that the ultimate end benefit of any ladder is enhance self-esteem. In other words, the only reason that we're doing something is because in some way, it makes us feel better about ourselves.

G: Right. I want to interrupt for one second and then I want to get you to go into detail about each of those four pillars because I think that's what's most important for people.

S: Okay.

G: First of all, in terms of the ladder, Sharon, *why* did you buy those knitting needles?

S: Well, I went into a store that I trusted and I think that was kind of interesting also, that that was an important part of it, that is was a trust source. That would be another ladder to pursue.

G: From a trusted source could have been a feature that we could have done a ladder on to find the ultimate end benefit.

S: Right.

G: Probably would have been something like it feels safe or secure or something like that.

S: We could do the ladder and see where it goes, but what we said was that they were steel points and they were very smooth. So take me through the ladder, go ahead.

G: So your sitting here with these knitting needles and you bought them from a trusted source and they had steel points that were very smooth.

S: Right.

G: Okay and what's good about having knitting needles that have steel points that are very smooth?

S: It allows the yarn to go over them easily.

G: Why is that important?

S: That allows me to go faster.

G: Why is it important to go fast when your knitting?

S: Well, there's an excitement about seeing the finished product and the faster that I go, the quicker I get to see how these beautiful yarns turn into the thing that I'm creating.

G: I see. What's the benefit of feeling excited about the end result?

S: Well, then I get this wonderful sense of accomplishment that I've created this beautiful scarf, or shall, or sweater or whatever it is.

G: Oh, I see.

S: I get to see it accomplished.

G: Wonderful. What's the benefits of feeling accomplished?

S: Makes me feel terrific. I feel good about myself.

G: Makes you feel good about yourself, okay.

S: You already know because of our tremendous experience in this, that accomplishment is an emotional end benefit. Other people might not have know that, so they would have had to continue until they got to, I feel good about myself. I feel confident. My self worth is enhanced. I have better self-esteem.

G: So you want to keep going until you get there and then the emotional end benefit is the thing just before.

S: Right. Now, having said that. I've been doing this for so many years that I recognize the emotional end benefits. I mean, we have a long list of them, so I don't have to take it all the way to enhance self-esteem, because I know what they are.

G: Right, but if you're teaching then you want people to go there.

S: Yes, and just for no other reason but to prove to themselves that that's what happens.

G: Uh-huh.

S: You will always get to enhance self-esteem.

G: I want to point out a couple of things, why I think this is so important.

S: Okay.

G: Just to make sure people are paying attention to the right thing.

S: Sure.

G: And can get excited about it. Let's look at the big picture, rather than framing marketing as finding a way to communicate the solution for a problem, when certainly it is. We're looking for something that gives us a lot more dimension and richness to craft persuasive communication.

S: Mmhm.

G: If all I knew was that you were trying to solve the problem of knitting faster, I might find out that the smooth knitting needles fit that solution, but I really wouldn't know what the mood and the tone of that advertisement should be. That would have to do with getting excited and accomplished and all of the images and context that I could place around that, now that I know those emotions. The second thing is, when you work from a feature connected to its natural end emotional benefits, you're putting yourself in a position where you can use emotional logic. Now most people when they think of

emotional marketing, they think; Oh, I'm going to sell with attitude. I'm just going to plug in some emotional hot buttons and that's going to get people to buy my stuff and we've got a whole series of CDs on why that's a big problem. Look at a lot of the *Super Bowl* commercials or anything, they are all very emotional, but you hardly know what the commercial was for and they don't necessarily stimulate sales. So this really creates a direct link between specific features and especially when there's features that are points of difference to your brand.

S: Right.

G: If you've got features and functions that nobody else has, well, when you can ladder those up to the emotional end benefits then you can sell with attitude. You can sell with attitude that is logically connected to your point of difference.

S: There's different kinds of attitudes to you point and that's how we came up with this paradigm of self-esteem. There are four aspects to it. There are two that are highly charging and get people all hyped up to try something. They create trial.

G: Right.

S: There are two others that are all about more traditional, the shoulds and doing the right thing and those create repeat. And so, the best campaigns have an aspect of emotional end benefits that ladder up to excitement and trial, as well as, something that makes people want to buy again.

G: Just like a really healthy balanced person will have a combination of id ego and super ego.

S: Well yeah, let's talk about that a little.

G: I'm actually just kind of restating what you were saying about brands and advertising from my background as a clinical psychologist, that it's important for us to feel well balanced. That we recognize and accept our desires, the monsters of the id so to speak.

S: You know what, before you go there, you're still remembering the last interview.

G: Yeah.

S: I don't think we set it up well enough for people to go there, but we can come back there.

G: Okay.

S: Where that came from was when we were talking about the highly charging ones. The first two categories have to do a lot with self and things that are about gratification, immediate gratification. So, the first category is what we call healthy narcissism. What I

mean by that, there are important ways when you are becoming yourself and you're getting to know who you are that it's good, what Glenn just did with me about the needles, ladder up to accomplishment. The accomplishment is one of the emotional end benefits that you find in the category of healthy narcissism. What you'd also find there are things like; I'm creative, I'm productive, I'm financially successful, I'm healthy, I'm free, I'm independent, I have integrity, I'm in control. Things like that, that are all about me, me, me, me, me. Me in the world with myself. Ways that I feel proud of myself, good about myself.

G: So what you're saying now is that after having done thousands of these ladders and looked at all the emotional end benefits that motivate purchase across different categories.

S: Mmhmm.

G: You're saying that you've found that there's like these four categories and one of the main ones is, what you described as healthy narcissism.

S: Yeah and narcissism very often has a negative connotation, but in fact in order to be a healthy human being, we have to take care of ourselves and be excited about who we are and find things that are really gratifying. Accomplishment is not just gratifying, it's also satisfying, it's more long term it's not just short term. The second category that's highly charged and gets us all excited, which I'm sure won't surprise anybody is love/sex. That's having an important passionate connection with another person. I call it love/sex but it even could be with a very good friend. But mostly, it's more about a significant other. So, I feel good about myself because I'm loved by someone who's really important to me. I look pretty to my husband. If I do things that make me look pretty to my husband, then I'll get my feet rubbed, get kisses and hugs, he'll be attached to me, he'll give to me. The same way around with men with his significant other. So, all of those get us all riled up and we want those very badly, the healthy narcissism and the love/sex. Because of them, when product features ladder up to either one of those two categories, they're likely to create trial. We get all excited about them.

G: Gotcha.

S: We want to do it. That's what you were talking about before with the id, like the impulses. They speak to our impulses and things that we want. Categories three and four are more about traditional kinds of things. The shoulds of society. So, category three is about nurturance, and nurturance has to do with being a good mother, a good dog owner, a good teacher, a good boss. Very often things for example that save time and money ladder up to nurturance. If you ask a woman, what's the benefit of saving time, she'll say to you. Well, then I have more time to be with my family. What's the benefit of that? We get to go to the movies. What's the benefit of that? The kids have a great time. What's the benefit of that? They tell me they love me. So the same thing with saving money. Dad will say, or a mom will say, or the boss will say. I save money, therefore, I can give my employee a bonus at the end of the year and I get appreciation for being a

good employer. I save money, I can get the kids that toy they wanted, I get a lot of mother appreciation. Category four, is altruism, that's about giving back to society, being charitable, leaving a legacy like *Stephan Covey* would say. Not contributing to the landfill, avoiding disposable products and these are the things we should do. It's doing the right thing. But, what's important about them, they might not get trial, but they get repeat. For example, I've given this example many, many times. I might have even said it in the first one that's why I was just hesitating but with panty hose, the idea 10.39

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