

1.10 Default To Openness

Be more transparent in your communications and only opt for privacy if there's a concrete reason to do so.

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Most people default to a superficial communication style and only share what's truly on their minds with one or two close friends or colleagues. They feel that openness is something to be avoided unless absolutely necessary and wait for a good reason to open up. Until they have one, they keep their cards close to their chests, missing out on many opportunities to connect with others, feel heard, and try new things.

Flipping this philosophy means choosing transparency by default and trusting and sharing with others unless they demonstrate that they are not to be trusted. This attitude can tremendously enrich quality of life and relationships and expose people to serendipitous opportunities that would have been impossible to predict. Like all tools, this tool isn't meant for every person and situation and should be used consciously.

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- Offers a richer, more alive way to communicate with others.
- Enhances life with opportunities to connect, learn, teach, and even inspire others.
- Opening up to people will naturally encourage them to reciprocate.

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- Opening up involves being vulnerable, which can sometimes lead to emotional pain.
- Being transparent without accidentally oversharing can sometimes be tricky. Failing to walk this line skilfully can hurt other people and your relationships.

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To make the most of this tool, it's important to be honest with yourself and others (see Tool 2.7).

This tool is about flipping the switch on your mode of communication—instead of defaulting to not sharing information and only doing so when there is a compelling reason, you can acquire the habit of sharing freely and only hitting the brakes when it becomes necessary. Transparency is not a binary setting of either not sharing anything with anyone or sharing everything with everyone. Rather, you can take a gradual path to opening up and experiment until you find a level that works for you.

As you open up and default to sharing, make sure your sharing choices match your overall preferences and well-being. Despite this new inclination to share, there may be situations in which you don't want to share an intimate truth. Just remember, saying, "I don't want to talk about it" is a valid reply.

Opening up sometimes comes with a price. Some people won't welcome your free and uninvited

sharing or simply won't know how to respond. They may be accustomed to superficial chatter and lack the capacity for deeper conversations. When this happens, it's good feedback. You might end up losing some relationships but discovering closer and more meaningful ones in their stead.
