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Husband-wife team tackles intricate nuances of communication on talk show

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Observer staff

By now, we should all be expert communicators—with all the phone calls, e-mails, text messages we consume daily.

Despite all these technological advances, we may not be communicating properly. “We’re so well trained in a process of communication that doesn’t work,” said Philip Mulford, host of “Communication 360” and “Divorce Mediation: Myths and Facts,” two talk shows airing weekly on Webtalkradio.net.

Mulford, an attorney and mediation professional, said his experience has shown that many attempts at communication break down because people are “always thinking of [their] rebuttal,” instead of focusing on understanding what the other person is saying.

Changing the way in which we communicate is difficult but not impossible, Mulford said. However, people must make a concentrated effort to understand the “constructive process of communication, to share ideas and viewpoints without evaluating or editorializing” the ideas of others, he said.

Mulford has built a career centered on helping people learn to communicate in a more “peaceful loving way.” For 18 years, his Warrenton-based firm, Mulford Mediation, has specialized in helping couples navigate the myriad complex issues surrounding divorce, separation and child custody.

By learning to communicate more effectively, couples can begin to “listen to other points of view without being threatened,” as

well as find a “new creativity” to bring to parenting, business and personal relationships, Mulford said. Reconciliation or divorce may occur, but it doesn’t have to be bitter and strained; couples can work for amicable solutions to their issues.

Mulford helps people communicate in more ways than one. In 2008, Mulford, looking to go beyond divorce mediation, was approached by Brad Saul, president of Matrix Media and Webtalkradio.net to develop a new radio show to cover “all aspects of communication,” Mulford recalled.

Communication 360 was launched shortly thereafter. Mulford’s wife Lisa joined him on the Web. The duo began to tackle the intricate nuances of communication in the interpersonal relationships that are so important to us all.

For many listeners, the concept hits close to home. The Mulfords have covered many areas of communication.

For listeners struggling to find constructive ways to discuss topics with their spouses, the Mulfords have addressed it. Parents who are trying to relate to their children may be stressed because the parents are fluent in reasonable adult language; their offspring only speak unruly toddler. They’ve tapped that, too. The Mulfords have even touched on how important it is for people to listen to themselves.

Through Communication 360, the Mulfords have found a way to delve into the communication problems we all face. With their well-rounded topic list, expert

guests and witty husband-and-wife banter, 100,000 people tune in to “gain insight” into themselves and their relationships, according to Lisa.

They discuss fun topics such as The Art of Mingling or Making Love Happen, designed to showcase the ways we struggle to make connections with new people. Time to Get Healthy and Stop the Madness: Overcoming Eating Disorders focus on how we all struggle with body image. Their shows focus on the ways we communicate with our children, our coworkers, spouses and others. Economic struggles, keeping romance alive and marital struggles are all featured.

Each week, a new show is taped locally at TDA Multimedia Solutions in Gainesville. The shows air on Webtalkradio.net. Previous shows are archived on the site. Mulford said nearly 85 percent of their listeners tune in “on demand.” Episodes are available for download to MP3 players, iPods or computers.

Even with backgrounds in mediation and marketing, jovial personalities and a healthy marriage and family life, the Mulfords, like every couple, “struggle in their relationship,” Lisa said.

They said it’s important to them to convey to their listeners that the Mulfords’ marriage is not perfect; neither are their children. They make it clear they, too, must work hard at communicating effectively.

“It’s certainly a challenge; it’s not easy,” Lisa said. This perspective allows the couple to examine their own situations on air, banter-



The husband-wife-team of Lisa and Phil Mulford of Warrenton host **Communication 360**, a weekly Web-based talk show that delves into the intricate nuances of communication in interpersonal relationships. Courtesy photo

ing comfortably with guests and listeners as they attempt to help others through difficult life circumstances.

“This show has been an amazing gift; it has taught me so much about myself, how I see Philip, our relationship [and] our children,” Lisa shared. Every guest has provided insight into her own life; she wishes this for listeners, too.

Listeners tuning in should expect to hear “funny, insightful” commentary on a variety of topics, Mulford said. His goal is to have listeners learn how effectively or ineffectively they communicate in their daily interactions.

The couple has improved their own relationship by being compassionate and considerate to each other. They no longer have “any hesitation” to share ideas with one another, confident in their ability to communicate well.

These Warrenton residents plan to continue their shows for a

long time to come. They said they hope Communication 360 proves “entertaining, fun [and] humorous” while bringing much-needed insight and information to those who tune in, Lisa said.

Philip and Lisa Mulford are active members of the Fauquier community they have called home since 1991. They have been married for 15 years and have two sons.

Mulford Mediation, at 30 Main St., Suite 201, in Warrenton, can be reached at 540-341-4615.

Communication 360 and Divorce Mediation: Myths and Facts are both available online at www.webtalkradio.net.

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