

Non-allness Exercise 3

By this time I believe you have accepted the notion that none of us knows it all. Two words we use, Never and Always, make it sound like we really know “it all” about something. For example, let’s tune in on a heated discussion between a young woman and a young man who have been dating for some time. It sounds as though dating will soon be relegated to the past. (You can read this dialog or you can have two of your students do it.)

He: You always take advantage of my good nature.

She: I never knew you had a good nature.

He: See. You always find a way to cut me.

She: You always moan about me cutting you. Grow up.

He: Me grow up! You always act like a pouting child.

She: Tell me you never act immature.

He: My friends always told me you were taking me for a ride.

She: I never thought that you had any friends.

He: Yeah, I do. Lots of them. And they said you never appreciated the money I spent taking you to nice places.

She: I never said I didn’t appreciate McDonalds.

He: Yeah, I always took you to McDonalds, never a nice restaurant.

She: Big deal. Those fancy places never impressed me and neither did you.

He: I didn’t impress you? I always knew something was wrong.

She: Yeah! Something was always wrong—You.

He: Oh me? I guess I was the one who was always late. And never an apology.

She: An apology? You want an apology. I’m sorry. I should never have dated you in the first place.

ETC.

Hold up a copy of the “Communication” poster. Read it to the class. When a misunderstanding occurs remind the class that there are effective ways to resolve these misunderstandings. Getting into an Always/Never shouting match cannot be considered one of them. Hang the poster on the wall.