

# Drama Free Language and Its Implications for Academic and Life Coaching

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True security and certainty is that conduct internal or external and/or communication that proceeds from an authentic individual. It can be conduct, etc., characterized by its ability to confront yet sans defensiveness and/or ego and, by so doing, the conduct and/or communication results in bringing about insight, awareness and understanding. In other words we need conduct communication that "shakes you up", that takes risks. Conduct that is only neutral is practicing to BE conduct, because it is part of the problem (anesthetization, illusion and mystification).

Perhaps in this increasingly global world we live in (if we are indeed truly living in the first place, what with external wars which may be only an external manifestation of an internal "war" involving communication within and without the self), perhaps we need a global preamble (mission statement) to a global constitution. An example of such might be as follows: We, who are practicing to become the World's people and in lieu of a bureaucratic order, acknowledge that we are practicing having a union externally until we can expertly govern our selves internally, by having an authentic self TO govern.

Perhaps we are all disabled by virtue of having a kind of "pre-personality", and consequently we all, or most of us anyway, have a habit of "pre-speaking". I found myself searching in various Skills Training Manuals for skills that approach being uniqueness "generators" because I (intuitively?) felt these type of skills might result in reflection (which to me is a priority, after basic needs have been met) in order to communicate better with myself and others. Likewise I looked for skills that involved the use of language that was stereotype free. It may be that process related skills were more a rule to scale order, (ie comparative to

competitive scale) whereas substantive skills, tended to be motivated toward learning unique communication pre to post any scale at all. For instance Linehan's value of the client/patient as an expert on her/himself might be considered a substantive type value that, when communicated to self and/or others, results in (hopefully) a unique reflection/insight to the client, like an epiphany or an AHA ! moment.

Skills Training Manuals remind me of the affirmations I first became familiar with during the Atkins Life Skills Training I attended in 1989, which in retrospect was awareness/self development.<sup>1</sup> After realizing that my gender habit "had" me and affected my affirmation and visualization generation, I realized that I need to re-evaluate my thinking on the whole concept in order to make unique affirmations for my universal-unlimited-by-gender (race, class, etc.) self. (Thanks here also goes to Debra Condren and her book Am.BITCH.ous). Similarly I may also have to re-evaluate what I (formerly) believed to be my unique position/opinion on personality, humor, etc.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Esalen type therapies are perhaps an emergence of Life {Skills} Coaching. Even earlier still, one could consider the Greek philosophers as life skill "coaches" with The Analogy of the Cave being a paradoxical example of that which results in unique self reflection. Though perhaps my "journey" to self reflection began truly when at about 4 or 5 years old I recall saying "Oh I'm Barbara"

<sup>2</sup> Few psychologists allow for Surprise! Type humor because the elite powers-to-be who prefer the status quo leave little room for flexibility.

In my life coach version of a Skills Training Manual I would tend to try to bring about awareness based on the realization that an acceptance of "dues paying" leads to freedom from the drama of whining. Perhaps humor, especially the spontaneous kind as opposed to the derivative kind, humor at someone else's "demise", is substantive when it is free from labels, and stereotypes, comparisons and competitions etc, because the humor is then universal in nature or humor-in- itself/uniqueness-in-itself and maybe humor's freedom from labels etc. may be

WHAT surprises us and delights us and /or our very soul! The "bugaboo" of balance raises its ugly "head" right away in the form of an oxymoron: what exactly is "balanced anger" anyway? Can anger control you? Can control anger you? Do you have a self to control? Radical acceptance i.e. as the term is used in DBT<sup>10</sup> is different from tolerance or maintenance because radical acceptance is unlimited, whereas tolerance is a mere expansion of one's comfort zone. In other words, if a communication makes a so-called tolerant person defensive, then the person's tolerance can be seen for what it is, namely a thin veneer of civility, whereas a person experienced in radical acceptance (a skill learned from DBT applied to oneself) will be able to overcome defensiveness at all costs (that is as long as the communication avoids being a threat to one's most basic needs.) Perhaps a definition of civility is a graciousness that is free from defensiveness.

What may need to be addressed is the before and after of communication about what exactly constitutes one's most basic needs i.e. Ben Franklin had natural needs being basic and artificial as all else. We need to pierce this veil of drama, i.e. consumeristic frenzy, etc. by awareness that such a dramatically competitive comparative life may be a fictional (unauthentic) life of mere distraction. To do this we need to understand the function of labels and stereotypes. For example do labels and stereotypes "emerge" as judgments sans critically thinking about duality (i.e. are you doing the judging or is the judging doing you?) Such "order" is a kind of range of "glueyness" to "expansiveness" (i.e. conservatism to liberalism) and thus pre-empts the flaws needed for the universal "before and after" of authentic self and other communication.

I wonder if there is unique ambition that could manifest itself in a kind of unique

communication that is free from all kinds of limitations, even political correctness. Could there be a universal ambition to communicate in a way that is hubris free and attainable by all women and men alike? Might this unlimited ambition be achieved through awareness of how stereotypes and labels too often "do" our communicating and our "living" for us? If we truly want to communicate effectively we need to take some risks because before anyone can become the very best that s/he can possibly be, s/he must first empower themselves to experience life's pre to post gamut. We need to emerge INTO uniqueness by risking letting go of the habit of being distracted, on auto pilot, living as if by remote control. This also means becoming aware of the habit of applying labels because labels provide a sort of negative "fitting in" as if a square peg can be forced or made to "fit" into a round "hole" of belonging in this world.

Labeling substitutes for the risk taking and the resultant emergence of the authentic self. Labeling can also be perceived as a kind of "trying on" or a kind of "pre-belonging" to a practice type of self, a kind of self-without-awareness. She/he finds this pre self preferable, to (risking?) belonging intimately to oneself, and paradoxically "losing" oneself in the organic nature of humanity. This("losing") is a kind of ultimate, exquisite, individually unique vulnerability that is the essence of humanity.

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An example of such vulnerability is when we occasionally need to risk failing in order to go beyond failure to the competence of failure, thus achieving self reflection, awareness and understanding. (Failure being defined as where and when we fail without the insurance of there being a safety net to "fail safe"). The result of such failure is, paradoxically, the leadership of

the "soul", which leadership frees us from comparisons and defensiveness, similarly to being in a state of "Flow". We occasionally communicate this way, i.e. to ourselves, when we experience what is known as "flow". ("Flow" occurs when we are "in" the present moment to an uniquely optimal degree).

Any communication, i.e. writing that constitutes reflection of the flow experience is unique communication and it is stereotype free consequently, before and after being subject to any limitations at all whether judgmental, political, social or even (especially?) personal. Perhaps it is an attempt to communicate a kind of self gratitude, or a bestowal on the self of incommunicable award or honor, undiminished by limitation of award/reward. (Perhaps this is why among competitors, nothing is ever enough in terms of winning, maybe we intuitively know this). Such a communication would lead to leadership Utopia where we would practice responsibility before any mandates come from external sources, and we would master the choices that exist prior to that which is politically (conspicuously to subtly) correct. In this way we would become masters at being responsible for ourselves while we would practice choosing our freedoms.

In order to emerge into such a community we need to learn that language is only a raw material with the potential for use as a tool. Language needs to be dug up and mined via filter of critical thinking informed by reflection of/from the flow of experience, before it can be fashioned into a tool. The philosophy involved considers that all language is pre-language if there is no critical thinking and reflection informed by flow. In terms of visualization, our raw materials, or our language resources are submerged (due to distractions of all kinds) in a state of shock, as it were, resulting in eventual crippling or a kind of paralysis of the language ability (thus we have what is considered "tolerance" but is more accurately indifference). On the other hand,

post-language can become a commodity (or a sufficient contingency) to be pursued as an end in itself. Why not, for instance, go before and after the range of what is possible (i.e. fantasy) to probable (reality)? Why not go before expansion and after contraction i.e. from what is pre possible to what is post possible?

For instance I see both covert and overt communication as a practice kind of written or spoken communication and I see pre-communication, post communication as being ego less talk or writing. In other words if someone is covertly bullying by whining or overtly whining by being a bully I would have them first confront themselves by communication that they are merely practicing being a bully to others (whiner = covert bully, bully = overt whiner), but they are expert in being a bully-whiner/whiner-bully, to THEMSELVES. In any case whining to bullying or vice versa is at best negative ambition and at worse it is negative existence where as authentic confidence is unique ambition and therefore free from limitations, i.e. comparisons, competition, etc, because it is also ego free!

If balance is flawed then logically imbalance, unbalance, is likewise flawed and does it follow that reason itself is flawed? Maybe what this means is that we need to see that the entire range of what commonly constitutes balance is flawed. Perhaps balance in all its connotations when viewed as the end all and be all for goal setting needs to be freed from limitations. Balance needs to be universalized by freeing it from labels and stereotypes otherwise balance becomes apathy masquerading as tolerance and or all other "ances" In other words is balance merely oxymoronic drama<sup>1</sup> ?

I wonder if "shattering" (ranging from paying ones dues to experiencing trauma) etc. is ever creatively enhancing, affirming etc. Perhaps if we all, men and women, shatter, then our "pieces" of vulnerability may accept, receive, etc. universal reflection.

Too often instead of living life, life lives us. Unfortunately many of us want the illusion of a passion that is really a desert of denial. Restorative (unique) life and the communication that proceeds from that uniqueness, might involve embracing the competence of failure as well as the awareness of the DISABLING, accoutrements of success; i.e. extrinsic honors and awards. Covert message being "I crave appearance over freedom;" overt messages: "we (society) will externally control you with rewards". Unique confidence comes with the intrinsic reward of self and ego transcendence with a side helping of the ability to communicate universally (even if only to one's self, and without the rewards bestowed upon others)

One intrinsic reward I "give" myself is taking the appointments offered to me to teach. I have motivated my students by communicating to them in exaggerated ways..

because so many college students are in the habit of being distracted and unless they are "shocked" (somewhat) by statements, their attention may drift. I also use motivations such as humor and props. I ask them to consider what communication might be like if we were all exquisitely, humanly, vulnerable. For instance what might we be like if we were free from limitations of all kinds? I suggest that in such a community the "commodity" being "traded" is uniqueness. In order to emerge into such a community it needs to be learned that language is only a raw material with the potential for use as a tool.

Imagine pre-defensiveness or over-vigilance to an imagined threat resulted in individuals being viewed as if they were countries and that they were therefore considered dangerous just because they think and speak uniquely, let alone because they motivate others to think and speak uniquely. Say on the other extreme, that of post vulnerability i.e. that being derived from reflection, there was a kind of post communication, where there was a awareness of irony and reflective redemption, (getting a rebate for purchasing an item on sale, with a triple coupon to

boot, or a Benjamin Franklin/Methuselah-like expansion of his age-to-accomplishment ratio). It seems to me that college students need relevant purposes for learning or self-motivation (provided it is a self and not a pre self to begin with) becomes deficient, so management of ones life where communication plays such an integral part needs to be stressed as a purpose of education, i.e. not mistaking managing a life for living a life

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We need to emerge into uniqueness by risking letting go of the habit of being distracted, on auto pilot, living as if by remote control. This also means becoming aware of the habit of applying labels to ourselves and others. If a person so totally blends in with his/her culture, his/her community, his/her family they often lose their authentic selves, for if a person is not an integrated whole in the sense that he/she belongs to him/herself first, then they can hardly communicate or bring that whole (i.e., authentic) self to others, (whether the others are relatives, friends, the community). Many of us are at difference stages of authenticity. Some of us have yet to emerge thus we are pre-responsible, pre culpable, infant-like, etc. Some of us are responsible namely we have rights as well as duties (shared social values) and some of us are post responsible, (i.e., altruistic). We may all, at different times, either regress due to stress and the resultant decompensation or we may progress, at times, to be Good Samaritan. But we need to authentically experience communication or else communication experiences us.

Too strong identification with family, career etc, is a restraint on our authentic souls and selves and therefore restrains our communication

potential. We do not give assent or consent to be in a family and we are under constraint of physical inability to be on our own i.e. without a career, etc, and we are under the emotional constraint of our blood ties. We don't know the terms in the "contract," i.e. if we will be a blue blood or commoner. Too often among poor families there are many victim of shame. To overcome this shame we need to become a "social worker" to the self by becoming aware of the emergence, maintenance and enhancement of our universality and humanity. Then we can understand the enmeshment of a family and the adoption of the entire race, gender as extensions of self. Each member of a family and each member of a race too often sees by extension a

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responsible, part of her self in the family culture, etc and in each others conduct. Thus there is impossible effort and utilization of energy to provide unconditional acceptance of their own "kind" and defensive postures are taken at all costs. But the cost is to the detriment of ones' individual energy and emotional and communication resources. Thus there must eventually be diminution and then fatigue since the self hasn't acquired an authentic base yet. For that to happen, a meaningful education must address a focusing of energy on defensiveness and the predicted speech i.e, ranging from the formal( Queens English) to the informal (slang, "gangsta" rap/talk etc.) imagined to be required, This limits open listening and true communication and leads to verbal isolation on top of class and work isolation, etc. Communications involving comparisons, appearances, material possession of status, are often

barriers to overcome. Unique communication needs to be practiced and modeled by teachers and peer communicators. We need to stress in the schools that we risk practicing to communicate with others (hopefully with all others not just those who look like us), and risk the possible rejection, etc. because there is a larger, greater prize with the risk we take, namely that by so doing we can master communicating with our self.

In reality we only practice understanding what others understand within themselves and we only practice understanding what others relate to us. We can only be experts at understanding what we communicate to ourselves about ourselves. "Family" understanding will only *be* practiced, at best, but if we have a kind of "family" of self, giving "birth" to ourselves, by finding ourselves, being our own best friend, loving ourselves, then we aren't victims of longed for love, because we can be a community to our self, and we can communicate expertly to ourselves. For instance, sometimes the unconditional love and acceptance we get from our family members or groups comes at too high a price, namely our self esteem. But if we must isolate ourselves from openness in order to be insulated from the down side of being open to all, then we risk losing the opportunity to truly know ourselves. The plus side of being open is that it acts as a kind of therapy by functioning as cathartic (mostly for the person doing the revealing)<sup>3</sup>. It also helps others to follow suit and gives others a model to emulate. There are many i.e. the bourgeois who think that the openness only adds to the shame being revealed but if this criticism is analyzed it can be traced to a kind of resentment of uniqueness and separateness. For instance, revealing a less than honorable past may harm the families or the cultural groups' reputation: telling truths about oneself thus has consequences for others and the "moral" thing to do is to take especially other's dramas into consideration. Well, that's exactly what has makes us a nation, and a world of and for ourselves and others' dramas. We have

"considered" our authentic selves out of existence. Another down side about being open is that dramatic people may treat you as if you had the plague, and avoid you; but these are fearful people who avoid the fear that your openness represents. These are the people who instead of living the experience that life has to offer to them "live" via the distancing mechanism of TV, radio, newspapers, etc. They are the people, who "rubberneck" to see an accident; they are the people who rationalize that living an open-book life is an attempt to capitalize on sensationalism in an attempt to get attention, fame, money, etc.

What is happening in the latest push towards family values is duplicated in trends of family-like groups such as gender, races, and even economic classes. The poor and especially the underclasses have the sheer energy of passion for survival. The poor are the dynasty of passion, freed from the self and or other imposed guilt and shame by empowerment of communication and education perhaps they can empower the rest of us with the commodity of their energy and passion, and we can all be re-invigorated, re-innovated re or maybe pre-created so we can refashion (or for the first time fashion) our authentic selves out of our blaze selves. A critical assumption is that we are able to achieve a unique life where there can be inner fulfillment, wisdom, meaningful purpose, flow, as well as outer social fulfillment. I call this a paradoxical "democracy" of uniqueness or democracy where the ultimate is intimate. We need to address the stakeholders, bureaucracies, businesses, and communities that have vested interest in maintaining a negative certainty or habit which masquerades as a status quo. These stakeholders choose to avoid attempts to have an impact on controversial communication issues. The purpose of this essay is to bring awareness and scrutiny to bear on blaze individuals, stakeholders etc, so that those who are addicted to the illusion of security and the illusion that they communicate can EMERGE with an authentic self to communicate to and from.

Individuals try on their authenticity when they enmesh with others to form societies, businesses, bureaucracies, etc. and consequently, policies, become diluted visions of consensus instead of enthusiastically held private versions that can be worked towards. Phillip Howard, in his book The Death of Common Sense, How Law is Suffocating the U.S. refers to Justice Cardoso who said " (we need)...., to complete and correct the rigidity of instruction by suppleness of instinct". (Page 174) We need to promote awareness of the psychic, intrinsic rewards that reinforce the doing of activities(authentic communication where we risk being vulnerable in an egoless way, ie sans drama) that are enjoyable in themselves. This essay could be subtitled "Stakeholders Anonymous" because it attempts to confront all stakeholders because stakeholders are often only

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ritualized "versions" of or images of authenticity, by relying on standard communication practices they are not holding their stake, their stake is holding them.

Too often we displace issues involving our proximate self i.e., unique private issues with externally public issues: Sept 11, immigrants, family, etc. We agitate for discipline to be impressed upon newcomers to our groups, country, family, etc. and we inject our poisonous pedagogy of comparative competition and hard nosed survival of the fittest on others as a rite of immunity/passage to acceptance, with the hope for unconditional connectedness, the American dream, etc. Vivian Gornick ("Who Says We Haven't Made Revolution?" New York Times Magazine, 4/13/90) states "The Longing for Connection may be strong, but even stronger is the growing perception that only people who are real to themselves, can connect." Of course the major way we "connect" is through communication.

Issues that become invested with "public" interest become monopolistically held and supported or railed against. There is a kind of cartel on what is legally, morally, culturally appropriate and in mindless reactions the two political etc extremes operate: like a sensitivity "bank" deciding on the range of, or ratio of: excuse to accuse proportion, retribution to proscription proportion and the privilege to the immunity proportion. Meanwhile, the absurd distortionality is itself out of all proportionality.

We need authentic individuals, role models who bring us out of the mystification of appearances and out of the justification of illusions, and into awareness of self. Edgar Z. Friedenberg in Dignity of Youth and Other Atavisms says: "One needs to feel that tentative solutions to the problems of a shifting universe are not only real and trustworthy solutions, but that they are also ones unique solution." . We need energized thinkers who lift our spirits with hope, instead of "anchor" persons who stultify us. We only need resources to provide for basic needs in order to think, and that beginning certainty, call it a hint of intuition, makes the "pain" involved in becoming newly aware reward the risk of thinking for ourselves in the first place, by enhancing and nurturing our "infant" certainty that is free from defensiveness and comparisons. True security and certainty is that conduct and/or communication that proceeds from an authentic individual. It can be conduct, language, etc characterized by its ability to confront and, by so doing, the conduct and/or communication results in bringing about insight, awareness and understanding, in other words, we need conduct and /or communication that "shakes you up," that takes risks, otherwise it is part of the problem (anesthetization, illusion and mystification).

Likewise, when safety becomes THE guiding principle we live by, are we living a life of safety or is safety living us? Are we fighting our fears or are our fears fighting us? Are we going to use our emotions or are our emotions going to use us? We need to comprehend the

mystification of appearance and the justifications of illusions. We all want security for our self, our family, our country, our world, but perhaps the closest we can come to having real security is HAVING a safe and secure personality from which and to which we communicate. Maybe the "best" way to achieve that safe and secure personality is by achieving awareness (and/or uniqueness?) from our life experiences (experiences being defined as a range of behavior, conduct, from practicing to have experiences, i.e. theory,(thusly we have only drama) to actually having the experiences, i.e. the range of having an experience, the experience having you, flow, reflection about same, etc. In turn, then, perhaps that can be turned into label and stereotype free universal

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communication.Until then we have great although negative investment in our illusions (especially communication), we are mostly out of control i.e. in the extreme it is called Alzheimer's" or too much in control i.e. withdrawal from communication or "Autism". This paper attempts to motivate others to also risk vulnerability so we can be change agents in our society. But do we have a society or does our society have us? Likewise with government, law, justice etc. Some extremists in the media suggest that we are in the third world war. Perhaps we need to get down (in order to get up?) to pre basics, namely defining humanity, a democracy that can be free from limitations of all kinds, not just the blue to red kind because there is a kind of dignity that comes and goes, before and after the comparative range of what is commonly accepted as morality. It is a kind of pre to post humanness that uniquely satisfies the soul before and after it comparatively satisfies. In the past I experienced what it feels like to "communicate" to my soulless self. Sometimes I think that others have this emptiness, too. For instance my

feelings in 1986 were feelings of hope dying in my soul. They were unbearable feelings. I felt like I could not or did not deserve to share or communicate, in other words, I became autistic to my soul. The soullessness of self is worse than any punishment from outside of me. I thought at that time that my pain and sorrow was due to others and due to the world being unfair and cruel and due to the untruthfulness of persons in my life. But now I realize we all could be not quite living, but like Terry Schiavo was, we could all be in a kind of vegetative state, disabled. We think we may have begun to take "baby steps" toward being truly human. So we begin by making whole the people we must have hurt emotionally. Perhaps we don't want to be defensive anymore so if we can help ourselves get restorative forgiveness from those we have

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harmed, we will do whatever it is we must do. providing there is hope to gain forgiveness. But ARE there others to GET forgiveness from and is there a self, in fact, to GIVE forgiveness to? Perhaps we are all just PRACTICING to be human. Maybe we all have to "pay our dues" and until then we are virtual human beings.

I have a great desire to motivate those who merely manage their lives and mistake management of a life for living a life. My goal is to motivate the emergency of truly representative leaders including those in the underclass, instead of the "image-managers" we have now. We need to enhance the pool of leaders with those who are knowledgeable by their past experience being in the underclass. I have been homeless and alone. Having no economic resources I had to dig down into myself, my authentic self, and there I discovered my pool of human resources, my resiliency. Without money blindfolding me with fears of losing security, I found the freedom of risk taking that "paid" me in the commodities of vision and certainty.

I am aware of my humanity from its depths to its heights. When I take risks based upon my humanity instead of based upon my security (i.e. economic security) I find that energy, desire, commitment, meaning, comprehension, etc. stretch and true relaxation results. Neither parent graduated from high school and due to family dysfunction, i.e. obsessive gambling, constant fighting, etc., I found relief from the family stresses by leaving home at 17. I began taking classes at Rutgers while working full time as a flight attendant. I took courses both at night and during the day, during intercessions, after working all night "red-eye" flights. My college professors at Rutgers motivated me intellectually and I began to realize that my service career was unstimulating. I hoped to have a teaching career where there was a freely "captive" listening audience in a classroom instead of a forced "captive" listening audience that couldn't leave the airplane.

I gave up flying and survived on a minimal income by caring for an elderly woman for three years. I substitute taught, I waited tables and for almost two years I worked as a pot and pan washer in a nursing home where other duties included cleaning walk-in refrigerators, commercial freezers, deep fryers, ovens, etc. In addition, I had to clean raw chicken delivered in ice and unpack and shelve dozens of institutional sized canned goods. I moved to Texas searching for work and found work as a airport gift shop cashier. I had to have a second job and I found work as a aircraft cleaner. My tools now were scrub brushes and work clothes instead of a smile and glamorous uniform.

During my year in Texas I went into business for myself. I incorporated Flying in Place

(educational consulting). I quickly went into debt and found myself in Florida. During my time in Florida, I lived either in a car or in a community shelter for the homeless. I returned to New Jersey where I was once again waiting tables, worked selling bus tickets at Newark Airport, as a sales representative for AT&T, a clerk for New Jersey Bell and an elementary teacher for the Newark Board of Education and as a tutor and an adjunct instructor for various New Jersey colleges. Living on the edge of economic safety and my actual homelessness was, despite its difficulties, a step up from the cellar of my unawareness of myself as a glamour girl in the skies. I do appreciate the opportunity to motivate the rich and poor because I have taught the poor and the vulnerable that there is hope for justice and happiness and I want to be able to do all that I can to facilitate their implementation of a just and equitable existence with dynamic serenity.

I am trying in this essay to motivate you, the reader, to think critically by hopefully, stimulating a close reading of this essay. But perhaps, just maybe, we all are merely practicing to read and practicing to write external words until we can "read" ourselves internally. Perhaps each of us needs our own unique language and maybe some autistic individuals or those labeled as such, are ahead of the rest of us. Maybe we are all experimenting with communicating.

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