

## DTD Episode 47 Show Notes

### Choose Your Words Wisely! Do They Make You Wig Out?

The words we use can be powerful. They can ignite emotion not only in us but also in others.

This can be a good thing but at times can work against us!

Through the course of your day you have one experience after another. Some experiences are significant and some not so much. In actuality, much of what we experience is pretty mundane. We travel to work, meet with co-workers, grab a beverage, answer emails, participate in meetings, complete assignments.....



We are the ones who give context to our experiences by creating stories that either elevate the

The words you use in a conversation are very important. But, have you ever stopped to think about how important the words are you say to yourself?

Years ago I worked with a client who was constantly frustrated and often felt unheard. She did have a very trying and important job that required her to advocate for clients who needed community services to function. She was passionate about her work and fought hard to commandeer every possible resource. When told no or not now she would get very aggressive.

One day during a coaching session she began describing a recent interaction she'd had with a representative from an agency she often dealt with. The two had reached an impasse as the agency communicated that they were unable to meet my client's request fully. They could provide much of what she asked for just not all.

As she told the story her agitation increased. As she reached the crescendo she proclaimed, "It was such an injustice!"

The use of this word caused me to pause. I stopped her. Can I ask you, I said, if this REALLY was an "injustice"?

It might be unfortunate, it might be inconvenient for your client. It does sound, however, like this agency was able to provide at least 85% of what you asked for. Is that correct?

She affirmed that this was true.

Then, can I ask you to take a moment and do some reality checking. Is that word REALLY appropriate for this incident?

As she thought about it she had to admit that it was not really an injustice. It was something much more tame.

As we continued on with the conversation I asked her to think about the number of times per month, week, even day she was using that term.

She kind of winced as she came to the realization that she was using it almost daily.

At times a word can lose some of its significance when it is overused. The term awesome, for instance, used to be reserved for only the most magnificent of sights. As a society, I think we've minimized its meaning to the point where it can now be heard referring to even the most mundane.

In other instances, the word is used often but does not diminish in significance. For this client that was the case with her use of the word injustice.

Stop and think for a moment about that word. An injustice gives a huge call to action. You get visions of going to battle to fix a wrong, conjures up images of malicious intent that must be corrected.

As she dubbed all of these interactions as injustices she was becoming like a soldier going into battle.

No wonder she rarely felt heard! She was doing verbal battle almost daily!

Where are you using words that ignite emotion bigger than required? Choose your words wisely!