

STYLELIFE

Loops and Threads

1 Open Loops

The book 1001 Arabian Nights begins with King Shahryar's discovery that his wife has been unfaithful. He kills her, and decides that all women are unfaithful. So from that day forward, he marries a different woman each day, spend the night with her, and then kills her in the morning before she can cheat on him.

And so this reign of paranoid terror goes until one day he meets his match. Her name is Scheherazade. And on her first night with the king, she knows that he will kill her in the morning. So to prevent this from happening, she starts telling him a story. But just as the story reaches it climax, dawn breaks and she stops at a cliffhanger and promises to continue the story later. The King, curious as to how the story will end, decides not to kill her that morning. And so it continues for 1001 Arabian nights of cliffhangers, until Scheherazade has borne the king three sons and convinced him that she is faithful and not to kill her.

The principle Scheherazade employs here is one that is known in neuro-linguistic programming as open loops.

Simply put, creating an open loop means leaving a story or thought unfinished. This is the reason why people are addicted to the show *Lost*. Often the acting and writing on the show are subpar, yet it has been so successful because every week, the show creates more and more open loops in the plot – leaving the viewer with an anxiety to figure out what's in the hatch, what the black smoky creatures are, who the Others are, and so on.

When I was first learning seduction, if I wanted to get a woman's phone number or email address, I'd begin a routine like the Ring Finger Routine or The Cube. But, before I could finish it, I'd pretend like I'd have to go meet friends. This way, if she wanted to hear what the rings on her fingers meant or what the interpretation of her Cube was, she'd have to talk to me again.

This is one use of open loops.

Here's another:

Maddash, one of my good friends in the community, met a girl who once told him the following great line.

"You haven't passed all three of my tests yet," she said.

"What tests? Have I passed any of them?" He asked, playing right into her hands.

STYLELIFE

Loops and Threads

“The first test was that you attracted me in a way I couldn’t identify. You passed that. And the second one was that you were a challenge. You passed that.”

“What about the third?” Maddash asked.

“I’m not going to tell you the third,” she said, “because you haven’t passed that one yet.”

It drove him crazy for a week trying to figure out what the third test could be. And though he never found out what it was, we learned another lesson on the importance and power of open loops.

In this case, rather than leaving an unfinished story, this application involves leaving an unanswered question in someone’s mind.

2 Hooks and Threads

When I am having a conversation with a woman I’ve just met, whenever she speaks, I imagine the sentence or comment as a long string. And attached to each major word in that sentence, I imagine a hook hanging down. And I have the option of pulling on any one of those hooks to start a new conversational thread.

To take a mundane example, if she says, “I’ve been working as a paralegal for six months,” there are multiple hooks you could pull on here.

You could tell any lawyer or legal stories you know, you could find out what she did before that year, you could ask her about the office where she works, you could ask her what exactly IS a paralegal, you could discuss your worst or best jobs, and so on.

Even though she has hardly given you any information, she has created a number of possible threads for you to follow.

And to be successful, you generally want to take the LEAST obvious but MOST interesting thread and follow.

Juggler has a theory that flips this around. He suggests creating hooks for the woman to pull on. He defines a hook as “a statement which brings to mind one or more questions.” And he suggests pausing after delivering a hook, so that she can use her imagination.

STYLELIFE

Loops and Threads

So rather than asking her questions, he suggests getting her to ask you questions and thus creating the impression that she is chasing you.

This is done by selectively leaving out certain information in a statement. For example, saying, “Back where I’m from, we don’t do those kinds of things,” might lead her to ask where you’re from. Or saying, “Well, that may be true, unless you’re in my line of work,” would obviously lead her to ask what you do for work.

Now, the art of hooks comes when saying something that clearly intrigues the person you’re talking to. If you deliver the hook, and she is interested, the longer you wait to tell her what she’s interested in (while keeping your conversation fun and intriguing), the more anxious and curious she’s going to get.

And this leads us to the next point in today’s lesson...

3 Multiple Thread Theory

Mystery, who originally suggested today’s assignment for you all, has an idea that takes open loops to the next level. He calls it multiple thread theory.

For our purposes, we will define a thread as a single topic of conversation. For example, if you approach a group of women and deliver the Jealous Girlfriend opener, you may end up talking about the topic of guys staying friends with their ex-girlfriends for a while. But after fifteen minutes of this, the conversation will start to go stale. And if you attempt to revive the conversation by asking, “Well, what about girls who are friends with their ex-boyfriends,” it will be seen as painfully obvious that you’re just trying to keep the conversation going because you’re interested in her.

So in general, it is not good game to focus a conversation on only one topic and beat it into the ground until it’s dead. More preferable is to start several topics or stories at once, so that, like Scheherazade, you leave your audience captivated and wanting more. Keeping multiple open loops going in a conversation will create the illusion that you and the person you met have a lot to talk about.

Here’s an example of creating a second thread during an opener, based on material from the Stylelife Forums:

You: Hey, maybe you can help us settle a debate. Was there a fireman in the Village People?

Her: I don’t know. There was a construction worker, and some leather guy.

STYLELIFE

Loops and Threads

You: I love that handbag, by the way. My sister bought herself one just like it for her birthday.

Her: Thanks. This was a present too, actually.

You: Yeah, I always find it funny when people buy themselves presents for their birthdays. I mean, that doesn't count. Like one time, for my 20th birthday....

The difference here is that rather than talking for ten minutes about the members of the Village People, you've started a second conversation in the middle of it. So as soon as you're done talking about handbags and presents, there won't be an awkward silence because you can return to the open loop about the Village People.

Be careful when you are leaving open loops not to make it too obvious. The most natural way this occurs in conversation is when people get more excited about a second topic. For example, if you're telling a story, and all of a sudden ten police cars screech to a halt nearby, you're going to naturally stop and ask what's going on.

So, similarly, if you're talking about your jealous girlfriend, and you want to open a new thread, the more spontaneity and curiosity with which you ask it, the better. You can always use a transition, such as, "By the way, I have to ask, why are you carrying those flowers?" Or "Before we get to that, you'll never guess what just happened on the way here."

4 Conclusion

Simply by being aware of open loops, hooks to pull on, hooks to create, and multiple thread theory, your ability to make a deeper and more exciting connection with someone you've just met will be greatly amplified. Creating multiple threads and open loops leaves her with the impression that you two have a lot to talk about. It creates instant rapport.

Don't forget the moral of 1001 Arabian Nights: As people, we love stories and suspense. So experiment with leaving routines unfinished, stories cut off at a cliffhanger, or unresolved questions lingering in her head. It can be as simple as saying, "I can't tell you the third thing yet because I don't know you well enough." You can close the loop over the course of the conversation, on a future phone call or meeting, or never. But, in general, if you leave her wanting more, you'll also leave her wanting to see you again.

Created by: Style