

# TRANSCRIPT

## Self Esteem and Purchase Behavior



This Is a Transcript of the FREE 42 Minute MP3:

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**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So Shari, honey?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yes?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I was hoping I could ask you a question today, is that okay?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yes.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** One of the strongest points of my system is how it can really pinpoint the benefits that are true point of difference benefits that make people want to buy and prioritize them within each segment of the market. But to really add dimension and feeling to those benefits, I think that your ability to get at the emotional reasons that people purchase and to really link them to specific features and functions. I think that that's just critical. I was hoping that I could pick your brain a little and get you to talk about it to my listeners.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Pick away, pick away.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** {chuckles} So okay, I know that traditionally in marketing research, the qualitative way that people get at underlying emotional motivation is by something called laddering. Could you explain that in English for people?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Sure, by the way, that's not traditional, that is a more advanced technique and a lot of times when people are doing qualitative research or quantitative research, they're taking a guess at what the features are, and talking to people and trying to seek out how the features link to benefits. How the functional benefits lead and link to emotional benefits. A number of years ago, actually a very, very long time ago, probably back in the sixties, the way that that advertisers came up with what was called, a benefit chain. The benefit chain starts with a particular feature. This is a full-bodied coffee and then asks, well, what's the benefit of that? And the way that they did it back then, was they would get two results from that first question. Then they would follow the line of questioning for each part of the tree.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So for example, the benefit of a full-bodied coffee is the flavor lingers in my mouth and the aroma is memorable.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay, and so then I would say; Okay, good. Well, let's follow one train of thought here. What's a benefit to the flavor lingering in your mouth?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Well, coffee kind of changes my mood and so it lingering in my mouth, the taste lingering in my mouth for like a half an hour afterwards or something, makes me remember the buzz that came with the coffee.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Mmhmm. What's another benefit of it lingering in your mouth?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Another one?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Another benefit is that I just like the taste and I just like to be able to savor it.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay, so now I'm following another part of the tree.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay, I see, so you are asking for two branches for every branch that you get.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** They would end up with sixteen twigs at the end.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay. So they would take every one of those branches and follow it to its natural conclusion.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Well, what was interesting is that until I formulated the *Livingston Paradigm of Self Esteem*, nobody really knew when to end the questioning. It would just go on and on and on. And so the way they did it, they would end up with sixteen and whatever those sixteen were that's where they ended. It's a tedious kind of process, particularly when they're doing it that way, the way that I just demonstrated to you because there are multiple benefits. I think in the eighties, a doctor, or psychologist or Sociologist from the *University of Texas, Tom Reynolds*, brought back the idea and called it "laddering". That became very popular for a while; you remember we

were doing a ton of laddering for a bunch of our clients when we first started in the eighties, right?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** In observing that, what happens here; you start with a feature. You get a consequence and you end up with a value, according to *Dr. Reynolds*. The way that we think about it, you start with a feature, you get a benefit, sometimes multiple benefits, that end up with an emotional end benefit that links to, in our understanding of this, one self-esteem. So you know that you got to the end of the ladder, when someone says something like; it raises my self-esteem. I feel confident. I feel good about myself.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Should we go through it for coffee, just so it's illustrated?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Well, why don't we do it for something that you have more heart for, because I know that you're...

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I'm not a coffee drinker.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** And it won't make sense to you.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Ok so pick something.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Let's talk about the pair of glasses you're wearing right now.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** In choosing them, take them off for a moment and take a look at them, if you don't mind.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I can't really see that well without them, but okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Tell me one thing about them that helped you choose those frames?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** You're going to laugh.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** They make me look like a geek and I kind of like that.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** What about them makes you look like a geek?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** You know, they're just kind of plastic black frames and it looks like I need them to see, which I kind of do now a days. It looks like they go along with a pocket protector. {chuckles} I've got a very bizarre past because my parents wanted me to be a hippy and I really preferred to be a computer guy, so I consciously choose things that make me look a little bit nerdy sometimes.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay, so you cannot see my husband at the moment, but I want you to know that, that perception is not at all what those glasses communicate to most people.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I need a new pair of glasses. {laughter}

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Well, I want you to know. I just want you to know that this is a very interesting thing, that I just found out about my husband that I didn't know after all of these years of being married to you. Not too long ago, I did a major piece of research on eye glass frames and the particular set of frames that he choose are sexy, they look professional and intense. They're anything but geek. I know this look and I know how they test and they test for a guy who wants to look up and coming and hot. Which is very, very interesting because his perception of them is different then most people, and that's really important what we just heard here, because you can't assume anything.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You just can't assume.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Sure.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I would have never known that. So let's do the ladder, just for the heck of it. If you want to look geeky, we're going to have to get you a different pair of glasses. I'm like blown away the way you see this. Okay. So in your mind and I've already tainted this because I interpreted for you folks, but in your mind, lets pretend we didn't have the other conversation. What's a benefit of black framed glasses? What's one benefit?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Looks geeky.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** What's a benefit to you, that they look geeky?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Get to enjoy my life, the one part of my life that I like working on my computer.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** What's the benefit of enjoying working on the computer?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** When I was a boy, I was encouraged to play in a rock and roll band and I didn't really want to play in a rock and roll band. I wanted to have a computer, but they asked me to grow my hair long and play in a rock and roll band. {chuckles} And it's really my full self. I was good, I guess. I got a little somewhere with it, but it's really my full self. I much prefer the numbers and the programs and the structure and putting it all together.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** What's the benefit of putting together numbers and programs and structure?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Well, I think the world is built on structure, isn't it? It's built on structure with heart and passion to fill in the gaps. I definitely want that also in my life, but every now and then I would be walking through *Central Park* and I would look up at the contrast of the skyscrapers against the jungle, basically, in *Central Park*. Now it's a fairly well manicured forest, but I would say to myself; I'm breathing the fresh air and I'm enjoying nature. But the truth is, look at everything that man can accomplish when they work together and coordinate things and that's not something that one person could do alone. Someone had to help coordinate that through a very clear structure and so...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** He's making me work hard to find the piece in here. Usually when you do this with the respondent...

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Better if they've got a difficult example.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right. What I heard in there was the end benefit was accomplishment.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** What's the benefit of accomplishment?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** It makes me feel better about myself.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** There you go.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** So, the emotional end benefit is the thing right before, makes me feel better about myself.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** And all of that lead up to accomplishment.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Accomplishment is in one of the four categories, in the pillars of self-esteem that we've identified.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I'm going to ask you about that in a second.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** But I just wanted to make sure that I'm understanding. Assuming that we had surveyed a vision care market for people that wanted to choose glass frames. Let's say that the geeky looking plastic frames came out as a major benefit we needed to focus on and then you found in your interviewing that that laddered up to accomplishment.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Accomplishment.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Now, does that mean you would build the mood and tone of your advertising all around...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Accomplishment.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** The reason being, we'll talk about this in a moment. Categories 1 & 2 are highly charged things that make us want to try. They lead to trial. Categories 3 & 4 lead to repeat.

Categories 1 & 2 are the things that get us all excited. Categories 3 & 4 are the things that we should do, those lead to repeat. Those are tradition in the world, being good parent, giving back to society. Categories 1 & 2 are about; I am me and Category 1 is what we call healthy narcissism. People hear the word narcissism and usually think of it as a negative, but there's a healthy form of narcissism that we talk about in psychology, where people are involved with self in an appropriate kind of way. It's kind of the part of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Need*, where you're becoming who you want to become and part of that is accomplishment. Sometimes part of that is being creative. Part of that is being healthy. Part of that is having a sense of freedom. Part of it's being in control. Part of it's integrity. There are a whole bunch of different values or emotional end benefits, we use as interchangeably, that are the step right before self-esteem or makes me feel better about myself that can be leveraged in mood and tone. In this case, it was accomplishment.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Gotcha.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Accomplishment was attached to the black frames. Now if you were someone else, like I had interviewed, it might have lead up to; I'm going to get some hugs and kisses from my girlfriend. That's Category 2, which is love/sex, because they're such hot looking frames, I'm going to be the sexy dude.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So when you are digging for the emotional benefits using laddering, are you ideally hoping to find that there are some highly charging emotions that...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** That creates trial.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see. But you also want to link it to some of the more grounded Category 3 & 4 emotions.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Category 3 has to do with nurturance, taking care of others, taking care of your family, being a good dad, being a good boss.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** But now you can't force this though.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** No.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I don't consciously associate any of those things with my geeky pair of glasses.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** And Category 4 is giving back to society.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Now, the fact that they're plastic, you might see as that you're going to use them over and over and over again. They won't break, so that somebody might say, they are taking care of society in a sense...

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** You'd have to dig to find that though.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You'd have to do the ladder for all the different aspects.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see. So what if it's not there. Is there always...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** It's always there.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Really?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** It's always there.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So for any product with any rational benefit, like a pair of glass frames, you can always dig to find...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** An emotional component. Because that's who we are, we're a combination of, you know, we have a heart and a head.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I totally believe and perceive that there's always an emotional end benefit behind every function.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Uh-huh.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** It's actually kind of new to me the way that you're describing this now that behind every desire for a product is there always emotion from one of the four categories?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** No.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** No, not in a given person. When you do a survey or a qualitative investigation of your different granular aspects, I mean, that's why this was so fascinating, because you are probably in the minority in the way that you perceive that particular frame.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Sure.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I happen to know that, only because I happen to have worked in the category.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Right, so it would be very obvious that I would require a separate sales segment.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yeah, you need a different sales letter.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Yeah.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Isn't that fabulous? For example, because a lot of people would think of those glasses as being trendy and sexy, you could be writing a sales letter with a trendy, sexy feel to it. Like a profession guy with his hair slicked back, black hair, black lenses, wearing a suit and, you know, maybe there's a girl in the background or whatever. You could be making the statement about these glasses give you excellent vision and it's very clear. They're non-breakable. You could be saying all kinds of stuff about them that you would figure out from your investigation. But knowing, that they ladder up to love/sex, you'd make it a sexy ad.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Cool. Okay, so let's break down the technique for people. So you start with a...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You start with a function or feature.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You already have done enough work in your category that you know what the benefits are. I'm not sure about that.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So for example, since the people that are listening to this will probably have been using the *Livingston Model of Survey Research*, they're going to come out of it with a list of desired features and functions in consumer language, in priority order. For

example, let's say this was vision care, they might find out that people looking for flexible frames that don't hurt their nose.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** So flexible frames that are comfortable.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Variety of colors.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay and maybe, financing options.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay and what's the question?

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Well, the question is, if the survey comes back and they see that there's clearly a segment in that order of priority; wants flexible frames, lightweight frames that don't hurt their nose. I want you to break down the procedure so that people can...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You start with the flexible frames.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Because that's the feature.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** That's the desired feature.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** And you ask, what's the benefit of that? You keep asking; what's a benefit, what's a benefit, what's a benefit, what's a benefit.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Until finally the person says, all right already, it makes me feel better about myself. Or it raises my self-esteem or I like myself more. This is something that you put into words for me a long time ago, that I just love. An emotional end benefit from a product or a service is something that I can feel about myself that I like to feel because I buy your product.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Something nice I can say about myself because I buy your product.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** It's really a feeling because it's an emotional end benefit.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** It's something nice I can feel about myself.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I can feel accomplished because they are black frames.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Or, if we did it with flexible, it might take us some place else. It might take us to I feel free and that makes me feel better about myself. I can spread my wings and fly and if they fling out of my pocket, they're not going to break. Or I can fold them up and stick them in a real small thing, I don't know what you meant by flexible exactly. That's something else, language is just so fascinating. You get to identify specifically what people mean when they say something, like you just made that up, flexible frames.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** But I wasn't sure that I understood what you meant.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Right. That's why it's so important to do the qualitative part of the process.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right, like in the other interview that we had, we were talking about probing and clarifying.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Flexible would have been something that I clarified because I wasn't sure that I really knew exactly what you meant by flexible.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Gotcha. So let's do one or two more examples. I find that's definitely what's most helpful to people.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Tell me something that you've recently purchased that you're happy about. You came home today with that new coat, do you want to talk about that?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I also came home with a hands-free can opener that you haven't seen yet.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay. Describe the can opener for me.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Basically, its battery operated and it has a fairly long life from the couple of double a batteries. You put it on top of the can. It opens the can itself and all you do is lift it up and the lid comes off and you just slip it off and you never have to touch the can.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Cool. Why did you pick that particular can opener?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Because it's automatic, it does it itself.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** What's the benefit of it doing it itself?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I don't have to wind that handle, sometimes it hurts my hands.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see. What's the benefit of you not having to wind the handle?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Taking care of stuff a little bit more fun.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see and what's the benefit of having more fun when you take care of stuff?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I feel more lighthearted about my work.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I see and what's good about feeling lighthearted about your work?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I enjoy my life more.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** What's the benefit of enjoying your life more?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I feel good about myself.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay. The emotional benefits that I heard were really the lightheartedness and fun.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay. It makes me feel lighthearted and fun.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** I would look to develop an emotional mood and tone of lightheartedness as I was advertising the automatic function of the can opener.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** For me.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Yeah.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Somebody else might have said it lets me be more productive.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Well, these are conclusions that you have to reach on an actuarial basis; you really have to look at the whole market.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Right, you have to do your homework.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Yeah, you're going to do twenty or thirty interviews and figure this out.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** And you'll see there's segments. There might be a segment like me, that's fun.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** What we always see is when you do the survey research first, the segments can be clarified in terms of the conversations they are having in their head and the priority of the benefits that they want. So, the segments come out quantitatively and then when you ask them to flush out the reason for the segments that when you really find out what the segments look like. I always find that I'm done with the research when I've got a very clear picture in my head and I can almost smell the person that represents that segment.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** I hope that's not too unpleasant most times.

{laughter}

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So I think we demonstrated a lot of range relatively here. Let me make sure that I frame this so that everybody is following it, because this is twenty years of theory that you've put together.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** What you're saying is that, every desired product feature, leads up to a rational benefit and that rational benefit always leads up to some emotional benefit and that emotional benefit can be placed into one of four categories. Right?

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** And it's important to recognize which of the categories they are in because Category 1 & 2 tends to be very exciting and create trial but it's difficult to build a business solely on that. Whereas...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** You might not get repeat.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Right.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Categories 3 & 4, which are nurturance and giving back to society or altruism.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** So walk me through each category.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Category 1 is healthy narcissism.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Things like; I'm creative. I like to have fun. I have integrity. I'm productive. I'm accomplished. I'm financially successful. I have freedom. I'm in control. There's a bunch of those like that. I have to give you an example that was just so fascinating. We did work for *Ultress* a number of years ago, remember?

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** If anybody knows the *Ultress* packaging, you don't see the woman's face. You see the back of her head. She's got this glorious high color, high gloss hair, as compared to *Nice-n-Easy*, where you see a woman looking at you, the girl from *Seinfeld*.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: *Julia Louis-Dreyfus*.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** *Julia Louis-Dreyfus*, okay. They used her a number of years ago. She's like the girl next door. She's got this big smile. You know, you look at her and you feel like she's looking at you. But both *Ultress* and *Nice-n-Easy*, both made by *Clairol*. Both ladder up to attractive, but it's a different kind of attractive, which is what's so fascinating. Attractive for *Ultress* is; I'm attractive and to hell with you, you know, that kind of eat my dust.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Mmhmm.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Attractive with *Nice-n-Easy* is; I'm attractive and the men in my life are going to love me.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Interesting.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Totally different. The women in the *Ultress* group, that used *Ultress*, were proud to be bitchy.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: So what that really says is that, feeling attractive is not really the ultimate end benefit in the two examples that you gave.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** It's being empowered.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: It's being empowered and being loved is the second one.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yes.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Interesting.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Isn't that fascinating.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: It is because that kind of a trap they get into when they...

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yeah.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Say they feel attractive.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Yeah.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** This has been great.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Category 2 is love/sex and those are the kinds of things that lead to; I feel good about myself because I'm attracted to the one that I love or the one that I want to love me. For example, the glimmer on a pair of panty hose, when we did so much work for *L'eggs*, makes a woman feel like the men in her life are looking at her legs and they're going to value her because her legs look so pretty and then she feels like the men that she wants will want her. That ups her value to herself and makes her feel good about herself, because her legs are pretty. Category 3 is about nurturance. I feel good about myself because I'm a good mother or I'm a good dog owner. I'm a good boss. I'm a good dad. I'm a good caretaker in some way. The kinds of things that lead up to that very often are things like save time save money. So what's the benefit of saving time? I get to spend more time with my kids. What's the benefit of that? We go to *Disneyland*. What's the benefit of that? They have fun. What's the benefit of that? They really appreciate me as a mother and they love me. Save money? What's the benefit of saving money? This is an important one because lots of time we're selling saving money.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** And also, a lot of marketers are blinded by that because they think that money is a commodity and they don't realize that it means different things emotionally to different people.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** So I save money, what's the benefit of that? I can buy things I really want. What's the benefit of that? I can get that *Ferrari* I've always wanted. They'll save two cents and jump to a *Ferrari*. That would be Category 2.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Got it.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Okay, but saving money might also go to; I can take my kids to the movies. What's the benefit of that? Again, mother appreciation.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: I see, so you really have to follow it up.

Dr. Sharon Livingston: Yeah.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: You really do.

Dr. Sharon Livingston: To know what that means.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Okay.

Dr. Sharon Livingston: This product is not disposable. What's the benefit of that? It doesn't add to the landfill. What's the benefit of that? I'm being a conscientious citizen. What's the benefit of that? I'm given back to the world. I feel good about myself.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Got it.

Dr. Sharon Livingston: That's Category 4.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Gotcha.

Dr. Sharon Livingston: Now, being a good mom and giving back society are really wonderful things, but they don't get us all excited. They are the things we should do. We know we should do them and they do get repeat. To give you an example of that, from the panty hose category, they were selling these real thin, shiny, glimmery, sexy looking stockings but they would run like crazy. So women were spending like seven to fifteen to twenty dollars on a pair of pantyhose and they would run. Back in the nineties, tights became very popular and women started wearing them for dress and the people like *Saralee Hoseriry* and *Bronton*, were selling them at the same price that they were selling panty hose. But, they didn't run. They lasted, some last for a year, maybe more. You could wash them and wear them and wash them and wear them and the stylists like *Donna Karen* and the high stylists figured out how to make them a fashion statement and the panty hose industry went down the tubes. Because, in addition to having the sex appeal, the whole Category 2 and the attractive was Category 1, they feel confident because I feel attractive. They also, were saving money. That got repeat and regular stockings, the thin sheer stuff died.

Dr. Glenn Livingston: Interesting. I understand, very cool.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** We saw a whole market research department close down because they couldn't afford to do the work anymore.

**Dr. Glenn Livingston:** Okay, thanks everybody.

**Dr. Sharon Livingston:** Thank you.

(End Part One)

(Begin Part Two)

G: Hi Sharon, honey.

S: Hi, honey.

G: Well, I want everybody to know that Sharon and I just did a terrific recording and went through the whole thing...

S: We did a terrific talk, we just didn't record it.

G: {chuckles} We thought it was recording and then we looked up at the computer screen and it was not recording.

S: It wasn't there.

G: Anyway, the reason that we wanted to do this was because a few weeks ago we recorded an audio about how self esteem was related to purchase behavior.

S: It was on laddering, specifically. We talked about laddering.

G: Uh-huh, laddering being.

S: A technique to get from a product feature to functional benefits and then to emotional end benefits. One of the things that I felt was missing from it was a good summation about the ultimate end benefits, which is self esteem and what we did a number of years ago, we came up with a paradigm. We call it the *Livingston Paradigm of Self Esteem*, which shows that there are four pillars of self-esteem. The reason for self esteem is that the ultimate end benefit of any ladder is enhance self-esteem. In other words, the only reason that

we're doing something is because in some way, it makes us feel better about ourselves.

G: Right. I want to interrupt for one second and then I want to get you to go into detail about each of those four pillars because I think that's what's most important for people.

S: Okay.

G: First of all, in terms of the ladder, Sharon, *why* did you buy those knitting needles?

S: Well, I went into a store that I trusted and I think that was kind of interesting also, that that was an important part of it, that is was a trust source. That would be another ladder to pursue.

G: From a trusted source could have been a feature that we could have done a ladder on to find the ultimate end benefit.

S: Right.

G: Probably would have been something like it feels safe or secure or something like that.

S: We could do the ladder and see where it goes, but what we said was that they were steel points and they were very smooth. So take me through the ladder, go ahead.

G: So your sitting here with these knitting needles and you bought them from a trusted source and they had steel points that were very smooth.

S: Right.

G: Okay and what's good about having knitting needles that have steel points that are very smooth?

S: It allows the yarn to go over them easily.

G: Why is that important?

S: That allows me to go faster.

G: Why is it important to go fast when your knitting?

S: Well, there's an excitement about seeing the finished product and the faster that I go, the quicker I get to see how these beautiful yarns turn into the thing that I'm creating.

G: I see. What's the benefit of feeling excited about the end result?

S: Well, then I get this wonderful sense of accomplishment that I've created this beautiful scarf, or shall, or sweater or whatever it is.

G: Oh, I see.

S: I get to see it accomplished.

G: Wonderful. What's the benefits of feeling accomplished?

S: Makes me feel terrific. I feel good about myself.

G: Makes you feel good about yourself, okay.

S: You already know because of our tremendous experience in this, that accomplishment is an emotional end benefit. Other people might not have know that, so they would have had to continue until they got to, I feel good about myself. I feel confident. My self worth is enhanced. I have better self-esteem.

G: So you want to keep going until you get there and then the emotional end benefit is the thing just before.

S: Right. Now, having said that. I've been doing this for so many years that I recognize the emotional end benefits. I mean, we have a long list of them, so I don't have to take it all the way to enhance self-esteem, because I know what they are.

G: Right, but if you're teaching then you want people to go there.

S: Yes, and just for no other reason but to prove to themselves that that's what happens.

G: Uh-huh.

S: You will always get to enhance self-esteem.

G: I want to point out a couple of things, why I think this is so important.

S: Okay.

G: Just to make sure people are paying attention to the right thing.

S: Sure.

G: And can get excited about it. Let's look at the big picture, rather than framing marketing as finding a way to communicate the solution for a problem, when certainly it is. We're looking for something that gives us a lot more dimension and richness to craft persuasive communication.

S: Mmhmm.

G: If all I knew was that you were trying to solve the problem of knitting faster, I might find out that the smooth knitting needles fit that solution, but I really wouldn't know what the mood and the tone of that advertisement should be. That would have to do with getting excited and accomplished and all of the images and context that I could place around that, now that I know those emotions. The second thing is, when you work from a feature connected to its natural end emotional benefits, you're putting yourself in a position where you can use emotional logic. Now most people when they think of emotional marketing, they think; Oh, I'm going to sell with attitude. I'm just going to plug in some emotional hot buttons and that's going to get people to buy my stuff and we've got a whole series of CDs on why that's a big problem. Look at a lot of the *Super Bowl* commercials or anything, they are all very emotional, but you hardly know what the commercial was for and they don't necessarily stimulate sales. So this really creates a direct link between specific features and especially when there's features that are points of difference to your brand.

S: Right.

G: If you've got features and functions that nobody else has, well, when you can ladder those up to the emotional end benefits then you can sell with attitude. You can sell with attitude that is logically connected to your point of difference.

S: There's different kinds of attitudes to you point and that's how we came up with this paradigm of self-esteem. There are four aspects to

it. There are two that are highly charging and get people all hyped up to try something. They create trial.

G: Right.

S: There are two others that are all about more traditional, the shoulds and doing the right thing and those create repeat. And so, the best campaigns have an aspect of emotional end benefits that ladder up to excitement and trial, as well as, something that makes people want to buy again.

G: Just like a really healthy balanced person will have a combination of id ego and super ego.

S: Well yeah, let's talk about that a little.

G: I'm actually just kind of restating what you were saying about brands and advertising from my background as a clinical psychologist, that it's important for us to feel well balanced. That we recognize and accept our desires, the monsters of the id so to speak.

S: You know what, before you go there, you're still remembering the last interview.

G: Yeah.

S: I don't think we set it up well enough for people to go there, but we can come back there.

G: Okay.

S: Where that came from was when we were talking about the highly charging ones. The first two categories have to do a lot with self and things that are about gratification, immediate gratification. So, the first category is what we call healthy narcissism. What I mean by that, there are important ways when you are becoming yourself and you're getting to know who you are that it's good, what Glenn just did with me about the needles, laddered up to accomplishment. The accomplishment is one of the emotional end benefits that you find in the category of healthy narcissism. What you'd also find there are things like; I'm creative, I'm productive, I'm financially successful, I'm healthy, I'm free, I'm independent, I have integrity, I'm in control. Things like that, that are all about me, me, me, me, me. Me in the

world with myself. Ways that I feel proud of myself, good about myself.

G: So what you're saying now is that after having done thousands of these ladders and looked at all the emotional end benefits that motivate purchase across different categories.

S: Mmhmm.

G: You're saying that you've found that there's like these four categories and one of the main ones is, what you described as healthy narcissism.

S: Yeah and narcissism very often has a negative connotation, but in fact in order to be a healthy human being, we have to take care of ourselves and be excited about who we are and find things that are really gratifying. Accomplishment is not just gratifying, it's also satisfying, it's more long term it's not just short term. The second category that's highly charged and gets us all excited, which I'm sure won't surprise anybody is love/sex. That's having an important passionate connection with another person. I call it love/sex but it even could be with a very good friend. But mostly, it's more about a significant other. So, I feel good about myself because I'm loved by someone who's really important to me. I look pretty to my husband. If I do things that make me look pretty to my husband, then I'll get my feet rubbed, get kisses and hugs, he'll be attached to me, he'll give to me. The same way around with men with his significant other. So, all of those get us all riled up and we want those very badly, the healthy narcissism and the love/sex. Because of them, when product features ladder up to either one of those two categories, they're likely to create trial. We get all excited about them.

G: Gotcha.

S: We want to do it. That's what you were talking about before with the id, like the impulses. They speak to our impulses and things that we want. Categories three and four are more about traditional kinds of things. The shoulds of society. So, category three is about nurturance, and nurturance has to do with being a good mother, a good dog owner, a good teacher, a good boss. Very often things for example that save time and money ladder up to nurturance. If you ask a woman, what's the benefit of saving time, she'll say to you. Well, then I have more time to be with my family. What's the benefit of that? We get to go to the movies. What's the benefit of that? The

kids have a great time. What's the benefit of that? They tell me they love me. So the same thing with saving money. Dad will say, or a mom will say, or the boss will say. I save money, therefore, I can give my employee a bonus at the end of the year and I get appreciation for being a good employer. I save money, I can get the kids that toy they wanted, I get a lot of mother appreciation. Category four, is altruism, that's about giving back to society, being charitable, leaving a legacy like *Stephan Covey* would say. Not contributing to the landfill, avoiding disposable products and these are the things we should do. It's doing the right thing. But, what's important about them, they might not get trial, but they get repeat. For example, I've given this example many, many times. I might have even said it in the first one that's why I was just hesitating but with panty hose, the idea 10.39

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