

10 Tips for Effective Communication for Couples and Marriage

“The first duty of love is to listen.” – Paul Tillich (German philosopher)



When you spend so much time with someone you are bound to have at least an occasional difference of opinion, to say the least, and it's not always easy to keep objective and levelheaded when you enter into a disagreement with your partner. When this happens, remember to **use these effective communication skills with your partner** to improve the odds of reaching a solution that is in the relationship's best interest.

Improve Your Relationship with Communication Skills for Couples

1) Use “I” Statements: When you talk about what YOU are feeling and needing it stops you from sounding like you are blaming your partner, which can make your partner feel attacked and take the discussion to a more negative level.

If you say, for example, “I need you to call me when you are going to be late. I worry when I haven't heard from you,” your partner cannot argue with that. After all, it's how YOU feel. This way, no blame is communicated only the feeling or need that you want the other person to understand and consider.

2) Listen and don't interrupt: Usually, when a disagreement arises between a couple, the biggest problem is that nobody really listens to the other person; everyone's just merely waiting for his or her turn to talk. Most of the time, disagreements can be resolved more easily using effective

communication skills and paying more attention to what is making the other person upset. Lookout for telltale signs in the person's body language too, for hints on thoughts and feelings.

By the way, active listening also means you must stop doing anything else besides giving your undivided attention to your partner: No texting, checking your emails, doing your nails, etc. Stop and listen. When you have understood what is affecting your partner it is then your turn to talk.



3) You do not need to be a psychic and your partner should not expect you to be one. When communicating with your partner, if you have any doubt about what has just been said or you're still not sure what is making your partner upset, ASK. It's worse to assume something that is wrong and then jump to the wrong conclusion.

4) You've heard this before: Don't bring up the past. Stick to the discussion at hand and don't relate the present issue with "that time when we went to your office and you forgot to introduce me to your pretty female coworker". You get the idea. Doing so will just get the ball rolling for another heated argument, giving you now two issues to resolve and things probably just got a lot nastier.

5) Acknowledge first, explain later. One of the best ways to keep things from escalating from a simple disagreement to a full-fledged fight is to FIRST listen and acknowledge the other person's feelings ("I can see you are upset because you believe I forgot to pick up your mother's birthday cake"), even though you know or think that the other person doesn't have their facts straight, and LATER explain your position ("However, I DID go but your sister had already gone and picked it up."). More on this in the following video:

6) Empathize with your partner. Improving your communication skills has a lot to do with trying to see the situation from THE OTHER PERSON'S point of view. This will help you understand where their reaction is coming from.

7) Unless you are directly asked to, do not give advice or jump in to “solve the problem”.

However, if your partner wants your help, by all means be as helpful as you can be.

8) Watch your tone! Sometimes it’s not what you say but how you say it that can make or break the communication. Keep your tone respectful, loving, positive and such that it invites collaboration.



9) When arguing, remember this is not your business partner, this is the person you LOVE. What that means is you are not just dealing with hard facts and bullet points; you must consider your partner’s thoughts, feelings, emotions, and personal history into the equation. Intimacy requires opening one’s soul, which can be scary and leave the person feeling vulnerable. Treasure and respect that.

10) Before You Shout, Call a Time-Out. Before your argument crosses the point of no return and you start saying or doing things you will later regret, call for a “Time Out”. When angry emotions crop up, people stop listening and things can take a turn for the worse. In such cases, one of the best things to do is to call it quits, for now, and state that you need some time to cool off. If you do this, you must call a “time out”, convene a later time to pick up the conversation, and leave the room. The other person must agree to let you leave the room and not follow you to continue the discussion.

Sometimes we end up hurting the very people we love the most. That is because we usually enter into a sort of “comfort zone” where we take the other person for granted and forget to treat them with the respect and kindness they deserve. Hopefully, these [effective communication](#) tips will help you remember that your partner is, like any other human being, longing for you to show them that you respect and value them. Listen and pay attention!



And don't forget to kiss and make up.