

Communication for Couples

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- A problem cannot exist between two people unless they are both contributing to it.
- You are responsible for your own upset and for your own happiness.
- Use “I” statements when talking about emotionally charged situations. For example: “I think you don’t understand what I mean” rather than “You never listen.”
- It’s hard to hear the other person’s perspective when you are upset. Better to arrange to talk when you have both calmed down.
- Stick to the subject being discussed don’t bring up other unresolved issues, you lessen the chance for resolution by expanding the problem. Talk about any unresolved issues at another time.
- Not communicating because you think it will upset the other person may create more hurt in the long run. Do it now, face it and resolve it.
- Sometimes just forgetting about the upset and acting normally can allow you both to calm down and move on from the situation.
- All people have an emotional limit, be careful you don’t exhaust your partner with your fears and doubts.
- My partner can’t help me if I don’t know what I want.
- Accept your partner as they are.
- Celebrate the differences in your partners habits and outlook - recognise it as complementing you and adding to the richness of your life.
- Be a friend, not a therapist.
- Be aware of your tone of voice. Be gentle. Tone of voice communicates more than the actual words.
- Find more ways of having fun together.
- Be kind. All people are emotionally sensitive.