Communication in relationships

Communication is the key to successful relationships. Communication involves the sharing of thoughts, feelings and information. It can be done in three ways:

1. NON VERBALLY by using:
   a) Body language
   b) Facial gesture
   c) Posture
   d) Hand gesture

2. VERBALLY by using
   a) Language
   OR

3. A COMBINATION of both.

When communication you will: use both non-verbal language and words, as well as tone and pitch of your voice to give further meaning to your message. How many times do you understand exactly what someone is saying by watching their expressions and manner, even if you do not hear them?

To communicate effectively you need to have confidence in what you are saying, confidence in yourself and be mindful of the person you are communicating to. Always be tactful, do not hurt, insult or put other people down. Give the other person a chance to respond and do not keep going off the topic.

When talking to someone try to be assertive, let them know your feelings and opinions without being too aggressive or passive. Always maintain eye contact.

The ability to listen and to give feedback is also important to good communication. Often people are listening without really understanding, their minds are not switched on to the conversation.

To listen effectively you need to concentrate on what is being said, how is it being said, and its exact meaning. Do not be distracted by things around you or the persons appearance or unusual mannerisms, and if you don’t understand, ask the person to repeat what they’ve
said. Your feedback or response will let the person know that you have listened to and understood the message.

**Assertive Behaviour**

To be assertive means to stand up for yourself. There are many times in a relationship that you have to stand up for yourself and be assertive. The end result being that you achieve the goals you have set yourself without hurting others. You will also gain their respect and trust, even though they will not always agree with your decision.

The following techniques will help you act in an assertive manner:

- Maintain eye contact
- Use a clear, level tone of voice
- Keep your body posture straight and face the person
- Stand a reasonable distance away from person, do not invade their personal space
- Your facial expression should be conveying the message you are conveying
- Think about the situation before you speak- try not to respond under pressure
- Try to be prepared
- Listen carefully to the other person’s point of view before expressing your own
- Put your point across in a definite, precise, and succinct manner
1. Brainstorm:

2. If someone speaks softly and with hesitation what does that suggest?


4. Can we say something and mean the complete opposite by using different tone and inflection? Example: “you’re an idiot” in anger, teasing or loving tone, would the message be different? Give examples.

5. List the points which you consider essential to be a good listener.
6. What message is conveyed if someone:

   a) Does not look at you when you are speaking?

   b) Stands very close to you?

   c) Does not respond to your words?

   d) Slouches their shoulders?

   e) Speaks very softly?

   f) Speaks very loudly?

Look at a variety of YouTube clips from a selection of TV programs (comedy, newscast, soap opera) with the sound down. As you watch see if you can determine the emotions of the actors and what is happening using their body language cues. Turn the volume up and see if you are correct.