



How to Communicate with your Spouse

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No matter how long you and your spouse have been together, and no matter how close you consider your relationship, there are common communication issues that surface in every relationship at one point or another.

Here are four important communication issues to address in every relationship to maintain or recharge that aura of happiness and comfort:

- 1. How to Actively Listen.** Each person carries a lot on a daily basis. Consider how many fears, thoughts, resentments, passions, and problems we all carry each day. That's why we need a release that both lessens the load as well as analyzes these feelings and thoughts. Recognizing this need is your key to learning how to listen to your spouse.
 - ***Listen without judgment.*** A person will not share what's on their mind unless they feel accepted and safe from negative rebuffering.
 - ***Realize that your spouse may want you to listen to them without seeking a solution.*** They may want advice, but more often than not, people just need to vent. If you are actively listening, you will be able to gauge whether they are seeking solutions or just an ear to listen.
 - ***Be interested and sympathetic.*** This is, after all, your spouse and everything that concerns them should concern you. Discern what you would want if the roles were reversed and engage yourself as the best listener there is.
- 2. How to Be Heard.** It can be one of the most infuriating and disappointing issues to face when your spouse just doesn't listen to what you have to say. After all, we all want to be heard!

- ***Be aware of your overdramatic attitude or nagging.*** Though you may not even recognize that you do it, if you're frustrated, chances are you do. Your spouse won't respect these tactics and they are more apt to turn off their listening altogether.
 - ***Ask why.*** Tell your spouse that you feel unheard, and ask them why that is. Do not be confrontational, that's not the point here. Sometimes people are so wrapped up in their own daily issues that they don't even realize they aren't listening to you. Make them aware and let them know just how much you want to share your thoughts and feelings.
 - ***Be prepared to compromise.*** Give your spouse some slack by compromising to help engage them more. For example, schedule a time every night for you to tell them about whatever's on your mind so their whole attention can be focused on you during that time. In time, your spouse will learn to listen without an appointment!
- 3. How to Express Your Feelings Respectfully.** Sometimes when we are angry, hurt or experiencing any other heightened feeling towards our spouse, we are unable to express our feelings respectfully. The pain or anger speaks for us, and we end up saying things to hurt them and worsen the situation.
- ***Take a breath before you voice your concern or issue.*** There's no point in saying something you'll only regret a few minutes later.
 - ***Have a rough plan of how to say what you want to say*** without calling your spouse names or placing undue blame on them. When you do this, your spouse will be less likely to get defensive and more likely to listen and work things out with you.
- 4. How to Build Trust.** Building trust is something that begins at the onset of a relationship. Whether you have a new relationship or you have to rebuild lost trust, this bonding requires the right actions.
- ***Be honest.*** Above all else, you have to be honest with your spouse about your intentions, actions, and your daily rights and wrongs. Trying to hide something in mistruth sets you up for inevitable trouble.
 - ***Consider what's at stake.*** Remind yourself about what you have to lose if you do not honor the trust your spouse has for you. This will help you to act accordingly and will help you build and maintain trust in your relationship.
 - ***Wait it out.*** Whether you are in a new relationship or are in a long term one that needs repair, building trust takes time; time will reveal whether you are a trustworthy person or not. Be trustworthy and in time you will win your spouse's trust.

Communicating with your spouse may not always be easy. However, if you follow these tips consistently, you will be rewarded with closer relationships, less stress, and greater happiness.