



Effective Communication in Marriage

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Do you want a marriage that's filled with passion, excitement and mutual respect? ***The key to experiencing the type of marriage you've always dreamed about is effective communication.***

At the foundation of every intimate relationship is communication. The greater the depth of communication, the stronger the bond is between you and your spouse.

Marriages survive and thrive when each person shares their thoughts and feelings on a regular basis. You develop trust in your relationship by sharing your heart and allowing yourself to become vulnerable. You make that trust grow when you resolve to become a person that makes your spouse feel safe to open up and be vulnerable as well.

Your marriage relationship can often cause complicated emotions within the both of you. If you commit to seeing the other person's point of view and creating an atmosphere of safety and open communication, however, you can experience a close marriage relationship even when life presents its biggest challenges.

These tips can help you communicate effectively with your spouse:

- 1. Above all, love each other. *Decide that being loving is more important than being right.*** If you're willing to concede in a disagreement, you can diffuse many angry situations without them escalating into a major confrontation.
 - Notice the warning signs of an escalating discussion. If you're starting to raise your voice or say hurtful things to your partner, take a walk and cool off. Instead of thinking about all the reasons the other person is wrong, examine the part you might have played in things getting to this level.

- When you return, apologize for your part in the disagreement. Usually, both parties shoulder some part of the blame in an argument. Then, calmly express your feelings.
- ***Be careful to speak in terms of how things have affected you, instead of pointing fingers at the other person.*** Think of the discussion as one you would have with a teammate that is trying to solve the problem, and not as an enemy that must be defeated at all costs.

2. Compromise. Many people think that compromise is an ugly word. However, learning to compromise is a valuable key to peace in your home and in your marriage relationship. ***Decide that you'll seek a win-win solution in every situation.*** When you face a disagreement, think about how both of you can get what you want and need.

- If you both give in a little, you show each other that you're committed to the relationship above all else. You show your love for your partner in a tangible way when you sacrifice a little of what you want for the good of both of you.

3. Listen Effectively. Many disagreements are caused by a failure to listen attentively and empathetically to your partner. If you learn to listen effectively, your arguments will be shorter and ***your marriage will be a sweet fellowship of two people who love each other.***

- When the other person is speaking, resist the temptation to interrupt. Instead of thinking about what you're going to say to counter your partner's statements, pay close attention. When your spouse is finished, repeat in your own words what was said. Say, "What I hear you saying is... Is that what you're saying?"
- This gives your spouse a chance to correct your understanding if you've misunderstood what was said. It also shows your partner that you care about solving the problem instead of simply winning the argument. You'll experience greater emotional intimacy and a quicker resolution that both of you can be happy with.

Strive to embrace difficult conversations as an opportunity to deepen your relationship and show your spouse how much you care. Put yourself in your partner's shoes, seek a solution that makes both of you happy, and let go of the need to be right. If you do, you'll experience a vibrant, exciting marriage relationship that survives the tough times and lasts a lifetime.