

YW Manual 2 Lesson 8 - Improving Communication Skills

Poor Communication

Making no effort to understand each other's needs and problems
Not choosing a good time
Trying to communicate in a noisy and disruptive physical environment
Not communicating with love

Good Communication

Making efforts to understand each other's needs
Planning for an appropriate time
Consulting with everyone involved
Communicating love as well as needs

Barriers to Communication

Sending an unclear message
Not listening
Ignoring the speaker
Not being trustworthy
Embarrassing someone in front of others
Not understanding each other

Benefits of Communication

Helps us understand others' feelings, joys, and sorrows.
Helps others understand us.
Prevents problems caused by misunderstandings.
Helps us care about others and feel unity with them.

Scriptures:

1 Peter 3:10 - For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

Doctrine and Covenants 108:7 - Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings.

Proverbs 15:1 - A Soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

Quote: "Each [family member] must be willing to do his part to improve, since the family unit is the basic foundation of the Church. Proper communication will always be a main ingredient for building family solidarity and permanence" (Marvin J. Ashton, "Family Communications," *New Era*, Oct. 1978, p. 7).

Ways to Improve Communication in the Family:

1. *Be a good listener.* Look at the person who is talking. Don't do something else that requires your attention such as reading or writing. Make appropriate comments so the person knows you are paying attention. Don't listen only for the purpose of stating your own opinion as soon as the person finishes speaking.
2. *Accept other members of the family as they are.* Do not judge, condemn, or criticize each other. Do not say cruel or hurtful things.
3. *Confide in parents and other family members.* If, at appropriate times, you share things that are close to you with others, others can more easily do the same with you. Sharing feelings creates closeness and good communication.
4. *Care about the interests of other family members.* Let your brothers and sisters know that you care about their activities such as sports and hobbies. Show interest in what they are doing, attend activities, and do other things to support them.
5. *Be affectionate.* Give a hug or kiss to your mother or father, a pat on the back or a squeeze to a brother or sister. Tell family members that you love them.
6. *Give sincere compliments and approval.* Tell others what a good job they did or how much you appreciated something they did for you. Report good acts of one family member to the rest of the family, and write notes of approval and encouragement.
7. *Keep confidences shared with you.* When a member of your family tells you something that is personal, respect that confidence and don't discuss it with anyone else.
8. *Help to create a good environment for communication.* Help to remove barriers of noise and confusion. Take time to have personal conversations with family members. Try to solve problems in family home evenings, family councils, or private interviews with parents.

Using “I” Messages

“I” messages are a positive way to express strong emotions. Practice using this technique to not only improve relations at home, but also at school and in the future with your eternal companion and children. Using “I” messages are a wonderful communication method.

Using “I” messages is easy. You simply start out with:

I feel... (State the emotion you feel.)

...when... (State what makes you feel this way.)

I would like... (State what you would like to have happen.)

For example: If my sister comes into my room and borrows my shirt without asking and I see her wearing it, I could say...

“I feel upset when you borrow my clothes without asking. **I would like** you to ask before you borrow my clothing in the future.”

You have stated your point. There can be no counter accusations because you are simply stating your feelings.

Now try these situations using your “I” messages

- You just finished cleaning all of the sliding glass doors for your chore and your little sister gets her handprints all over the glass.
- A girl at school purposely kicks your backpack in the hallway.
- Your mom promises to take you and your friend to a movie, but then plans fall through and you don’t get to go.
- You and your brother make cookies, but he takes all of the credit.
- A friend takes your cell phone and starts texting without asking.

Now think of a time where you were upset or could have communicated better. Write the situation down on a scrap of paper. When everyone is done, you can share your situation and use your “I” message to state how you felt.

Good luck!

I feel happy when you try to learn new things. I would like you to use this method at least five times this week and report back next week.