



A Study on Effective Communication that Influences a Relationship

Mrs. S. Anithalakshmi

Head/Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Madurai Institute of Social Sciences, Tamil Nadu, India.

Abstract: *Social connections foster happiness because they lead to the development of good feelings, which are a vital part of happiness. People can interact with us verbally or nonverbally; a grin can even help us feel closer to one another. However, effective communication is a crucial component of constructive social interaction. This study paper looks into the importance of communication, communicating clearly in a relationship (Active constructive responding model), listening, and communication, non-verbal communication, and communication in a personal relationship. This paper focuses on providing tips for effective listening and improving communication in a relationship.*

Keywords: *Communication, Non-verbal communication, Active listening, Relationship, Empathy.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

Information flow from one place to another is referred to as communication. A sender, a receiver, and a (verbal or nonverbal) message that is encoded by the sender and decoded by the recipient often comprise a communication paradigm. It also contains noise, which is anything that can interfere with communication, as well as feedback, which is the recipient's reaction to the message. Encoding is the process through which a sender converts thoughts into understandable messages. Both the verbal and nonverbal components of the communication are interpreted by the receiver. Although this appears straightforward in theory, a lot happens in the interim, and no message is ever decoded objectively.

The method by which we interpret a message is never the true reality. Our individual explanatory frameworks and filters help to shape how the world seems to us. Communication in a relationship allows you to convey your needs and feelings to the other person. communication with your partner enriches your relationship. The fact that the message being sent is rarely purely factual information adds to the complexity of the communication process.

2. The objectives of the study :

1. To study the importance of communication, communicating clearly in a relationship (Active constructive responding model), active listening, and non-verbal communication.
2. To study communication in a personal relationship
3. To provide tips for effective communication and improving communication in a relationship.

3. Importance of communication :

We all have a tremendous need to connect and feel like we belong. This is why having fulfilling social connections makes us feel better about ourselves and gives us more life pleasure (Lyubomirsky, 2008). "People interactions are what make life worthwhile," We communicate not only to express our opinions to others but also to ourselves. The act of speaking is thought. According to Robert Sacks, Every message has four sides, according to Friedemann Schulz von Thun's Four-Sides model of communication from 1981.

- Fact: What I notify you of (information, claims, and facts);
- Self-disclosure: What I divulge about myself (the sender's identity);
- Relationship: My impressions of you (comments on how well we get along);
- What I want to convince you to do (an attempt to influence the receiver).



Communicating clearly in a relationship

The foundation of a happy marriage is communication. It's how you and your partner communicate, express your ideas, and resolve conflicts. Relationship communication abilities are not always natural for people. Some couples can need years to perfect their strategies. However, with time, they will be able to communicate honestly and openly. No matter how close you two are already, there is always room to deepen and expand your bond. Chat with one another. You never know the spouse's mind, no matter how well you understand and cherish each other. To avoid misunderstandings that can cause hurt, rage, resentment, or bewilderment, we must talk clearly.

Relationships require two people, each of whom has particular requirements and preferences in terms of communication. It's crucial to find a communication technique that works for a couple's relationship. Effective communication requires effort and hard work. There is never the right moment to communicate. Be clear while communicating with your partner to ensure that they understand and accept your argument. Make sure you comprehended what your partner stated. When communicating with your companion, try these things: schedule a time when you can speak without being distracted by other people or objects like phones, computers, or television. So that your spouse can hear you clearly and comprehend what you mean, consider what you want to say, and be precise about what you want to convey. Talk about the circumstances and how they affect you. To convey your needs wants, and feelings, use "I" statements like "I need to" and "I feel."

Non-verbal communication

We can communicate a lot without actually speaking. Our facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language all send messages. The other person can tell how we feel about them through these nonverbal cues. When our words and sentiments don't match, our nonverbal communication is frequently 'heard' and taken seriously. For instance, communicating your affection to your partner in a flat, bored voice sends two completely different messages. Look to see if what you are saying is reflected in your body language.

Listening and communication

Listening is considered one of the most crucial communication skills. The only way to build strong, lasting relationships is to pay attention to one another (Weger, Castle, & Emmett, 2010). If you and your partner aren't communicating, it's possible that neither of you is really listening; instead, you're both just attempting to convince each other that you're correct. Or, perhaps you're both listening while "doing something else" as well. Truly listening to someone while doing something else is impossible by Scott Peck, M.

The most typical listening errors are listed below:

while someone else is speaking, you're daydreaming or considering something else (even something as unimportant as your shopping list);

- Pondering your next move;
- Evaluating the other person's speech;
- Listening with a purpose or desired result in mind.

But listening actively is far more than just remaining silent. It is an art that demands a sincere curiosity for the other person, not an anticipatory mind. In order to listen actively,

- Nonverbal communication (show your attention)
- Focusing on your counterpart rather than your own thoughts
- No criticism
- Accepting silence

Effective communication requires active listening. A supportive partner can help their spouse converse candidly and openly.

Tips for effective listening

- Keep comfortable eye contact (when culturally appropriate) (where culturally appropriate).
- Make eye contact with the other individual and signal your interest and concern.
- Pose yourself in a neutral, non-defensive manner with your legs and arms uncrossed.
- Don't sit or stand sideways; instead, turn to face the other person.
- To avoid staring down at or up at the other person, sit or stand on the same level.
- Avoid making distracting motions like tapping your foot or fiddling with a pen, looking at documents, or fidgeting with your fingers.
- Recognize that obstacles like noise, obstructions, or physical barriers will make effective communication challenging. To make sure you're actually listening, silence any phones or other forms of contact.



- Don't interrupt the person who is speaking after you.
- Display sincere interest and attention.
- Use the wording "I feel" and "What I need is"
- Keep your tone in mind.
- If you are genuinely upset about anything, be ready to take a break. Before you handle the matter, it might be preferable to take a deep breath.
- Ask the other person for their opinion on how well you are listening.

Communication in Personal Relationships

Marshall B. Rosenberg's nonviolent communication method is a fantastic way to enhance communication in any personal relationship. It is predicated on the capability and willingness to approach and perceive problems objectively. This is crucial because any time you try to change someone, resistance will arise. Discussing a topic that is on your mind is a breeze with this method. For instance, you feel upset and disappointed when your partner is late.

- **Observation ≠ Interpretation/Evaluation**

First, make an effort to convey your findings without categorizing or analysing them. This observation is purely factual and unreflective.

- **Feelings ≠ Thoughts**

Second, it's critical that you express your emotions. Oftentimes, unspoken feelings give rise to an argument. Make sure you are aware of your feelings and that you express them without passing judgment.

- **Need ≠ Strategy**

Thirdly, you must comprehend and communicate your needs. Respect the life partner's needs also. Give the opportunity to decide. Ask opinions. Be considerate.

- **Request ≠ Demand**

A clear request is made in the fourth phase. What has to be done by your partner for you to believe your needs have been met? Responsibility and commitment are very important in a marriage. Be assertive. Be accountable.

The four-step procedure is "simple but not easy," in the words of Rosenberg (2003), and it will take some time to understand. Although it could seem awkward at first, with practice your communication will become clearer. You are requesting what you require in a nonviolent manner from your partner while tolerating all of their shortcomings. Figure-1 shows the 4 steps to be followed in a personal relationship.



Figure-1

4. FINDINGS :

While peaceful communication is a fantastic approach to enhancing interpersonal connection, there are other ways to do so by being a better receiver. Positive emotions have been found to be beneficial for well-being by Barbara Fredrickson in 2003. Positive emotion-boosting chances abound throughout conversations. By its very nature, appreciation feedback must be encouraging, motivating, and centered on the positive aspects of the circumstance. The Active Constructive Responding Model is a popular one (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004).

Active Constructive Responding Model

The approach suggests that communications might be proactive or passive, positive or negative. Here are some alternative ways you can react to your friend, for instance, if he informs you that a presentation he delivered went well. Table 1 represents the Response fits into one of four categories:

	Active	passive
Constructive	1.)Nurturing Active Constructive	2)Cold Passive Constructive



Destructive	3.)Hurtful Active Destructive	4.)Ignorant Passive Destructive
-------------	----------------------------------	------------------------------------

Table-1

- Nurturing (active constructive)
- (active constructive) "That's fantastic! I'm overjoyed for you! More information, please!"
- "Oh, that is good," with a cold (passive-constructive) tone.
- Ignorant (passively destructive) "I'm sorry, but I don't have time right now to listen to you;"

"That's unexpected, you're typically really lousy at giving presentations," someone said in a hurtful (actively destructive) manner. Make sure you answer in an active, productive manner if you want to increase communication. Be animated and really interested. If you actually felt thrilled for him, say something like, "That is amazing! Good work! I'm incredibly delighted for you because I know how diligently you worked on the PowerPoint slides and speech preparation.

Additionally, you might inquire further about what went so well or ask your friend to share any compliments they received. You can help the other person relive the pleasant event by asking more questions, which will encourage all the pleasant feeling to come back.

Managing conflict with communication

- Don't give someone silent treatment.
- Don't make snap judgments. Instead of speculating about intentions, ascertain all the facts.
- Talk about what truly occurred. Be impartial.
- Instead of trying to outdo one another, learn to understand one another.
- Instead of utilizing the past tense, speak in the present and future.
- Don't let other minor issues divert your attention from the main issue.
- Discuss issues that have damaged your feelings or your partner's feelings before moving on to issues involving divergent viewpoints.
- Instead of saying "You are," use "I feel".
- Improving communication in a relationship.

5. SUMMARY :

Understanding Six Human Needs

Although everyone has six basic needs, we all prioritize these requirements differ depending on our values and principles. You'll know how to speak with your spouse and how to meet their requirements once you ascertain which wants are most important to them.

- ❖ The demand for assurance is a basic human need. We want pleasure in order to avoid discomfort, worry, and emotional hazards because of this need. How secure does your partner feel in your relationship, you might wonder? Various things bring comfort and safety to different people. Be honest with your partner about the things that make them feel secure and certain.
- ❖ The need for variation is the second human need that has an impact on relationships and communication. If you and your spouse can communicate effectively, uncertainty need not always be frightening. Relationships are built with wholesome difficulties that help partners grow as a unit. As your communication skills improve, you'll see that variety keeps things fresh and intriguing with your partner.
- ❖ The third need of humans is significance: we all want to feel special and significant. Since your spouse needs to know exactly how to match your requests, communication is crucial in order to satisfy this particular wish. How can you express to your lover your importance to them in a more tangible way than just by telling them? By giving them sensitive touches, being there for them when they need you,
- ❖ Love and companionship rank as the fourth essential human need. Everyone needs to feel a part of a community. While loving connections can make us feel the most alive and give us know that we are cherished, the absence of love can hurt more than anything else. Too frequently, when in dispute with our relationships, we instinctively respond, "I love you," forgetting to demonstrate our love in a genuine, practical way that meets our partner's needs.
- ❖ The sixth necessity of humans is growth. The human experience is dynamic, and without ongoing development, our relationships would get stale. No matter whatever paths—emotional, intellectual, spiritual, or otherwise—interest us the most, we continuously work to advance along those. Your companion needs to develop just as



much as you do, therefore as we improve our communication, we can also improve our ability to develop as a family. When was the last time you encouraged your partner's development in the hobbies, they like the most? How can you give them the best help possible moving forward?

- ❖ Contribution and generosity are the final and sixth needs of humans. Never forget that giving is the key to life. Our ability to contribute affects whom we become and establishes our identity, legacy, and social duty; it gives us a feeling of purpose. Consider how much you already give to your relationship and how much you could give. Do you spend time volunteering? Your complete attention? giving someone credibility? A second chance? Strong partner communication helps them to always come up with new and better ways to increase each other's pleasure.

6. DISCUSSIONS :

Instead of words, unhealthy verbal communication frequently begins with unfavorable ideas or challenging feelings. If you've been dating someone for a while, you've likely gotten to know them well enough to feel this way. You can predict how they would respond in specific circumstances, but your preconceived notions about them may cause you to pass up an opportunity to rediscover them. This frequently has a detrimental effect on our communication in romantic relationships because relationships are all about maintaining curiosity about the other person and their worldview. But how can you possibly perceive your mate differently after all these years?

Marva Collins, an American teacher renowned for her stern yet kind instruction style, has worked with underprivileged and problematic adolescents who struggle to succeed in school. Her techniques of instruction enabled them to succeed. Any relationship would benefit from her approach. As a result, she demonstrated her belief in the pupils by telling them that she thought they were deserving of the best education rather than asking them to demonstrate their ability to achieve high grades. This proved to be quite encouraging and motivating (Collins & Tamarkin, 1990).

Collins' strategy was to shape the right perception for both herself and other people. As long as they did not show her otherwise, she would treat kids as though they were top Harvard graduates. She started off by having students' full confidence, support, and appreciation. When used in a romantic setting, this can significantly enhance communication.

Collins made it a point to let students know they had already received their marks for the upcoming school year at the start of each semester. She informed them that they had all received top marks and that it was their responsibility to do everything in their power to maintain this position during the semester. You can learn to communicate openly and clearly. Some people find it difficult to speak, thus they might require some time and support to do so. These folks may be attentive listeners or those whose deeds speak louder than words.

7. CONCLUSION :

Establishing closeness - intimacy is not just a sexual relationship; it also includes sharing experiences, interests, and worries with your partner as well as expressing affection and admiration. Moments, when you feel close to and attached to your mate, are what foster intimacy. It entails having the capacity to console and be consoled as well as to be transparent and honest.

Communication skills can be enhanced by:

Pay attention to your partner. For the time being, set aside your own thoughts and make an effort to comprehend their needs, wants, needs, and objectives (this is called empathy)

Be conscious of your tone of voice when negotiating and keep in mind that you don't always have to be right. Express to your spouse your positive thoughts, such as what you value and admire about them. Try to let the problem go or come to an agreement to disagree if it is not that significant. Figure 2 shows that communication skills.

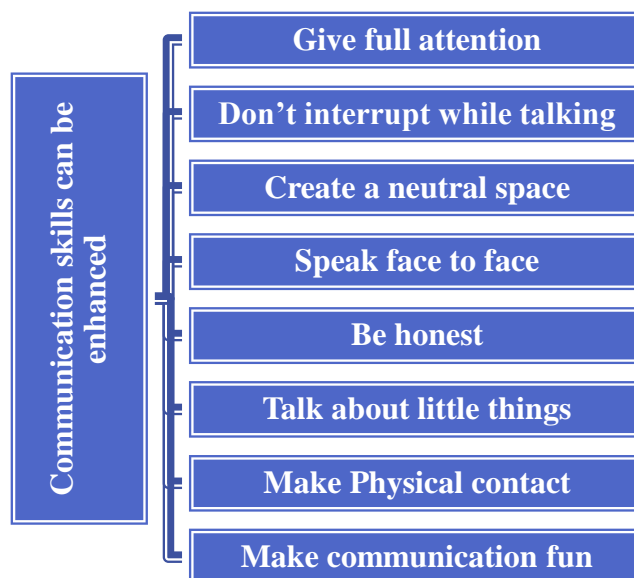


Figure-2

Give full attention

Never chat while the partner is speaking. Give the spouse your full attention whether they are cracking a joke or sharing a sensitive family matter. Put aside any devices that might be a distraction, mute or turn off the TV, and lean closer to your companion. This will demonstrate your concern for their privacy to them. Excellent techniques to demonstrate that you are paying attention to your spouse include nodding and maintaining eye contact. To reduce technology distractions, designate a space in the home.

Don't interrupt while talking

It's critical that both you and your spouse feel heard and given an opportunity to speak when talking. Interrupt during the talk easily the fight starts. So, avoid interruption. Waiting is crucial because it can be tempting to add your own viewpoint while your spouse is still speaking, particularly if you believe they are mistaken about a fact. Your lover will respect you more if you pay them your full attention while being focused and connected.

Create a neutral space

Speaking is not always simple. Many couples find it helpful to discuss "difficult" marital issues in an impartial setting, like the kitchen table. Another instance of one party believing they had the proverbial "high ground" in the disagreement is arguing in a relative's home.

Speak face to face

Consistently having face-to-face conversations about significant issues is one of the best communication techniques you can do in relationships. Since the tone of voice cannot be discerned through text messages, texting is undoubtedly not the best way to have significant relationship conversations or make important decisions. Instead, pick a moment when you can speak to your partner face to face. This will enable you to fully focus on one another and understand one another's nonverbal signs. There is little chance of something becoming "lost in translation" through technology when something is communicated in person.

Be honest

When you feel that there are difficulties that need to be discussed with your partner, be honest about them. It also entails owning up to your mistakes and expressing regret rather than creating excuses. Being honest with your partner not only promotes open and sincere conversation but also helps establish trust.

Talk about little things

The ability to discuss both small and huge issues with your partner is one of the best communication skills in a relationship. Talking about the day, and your views, or sharing amusing stories from your week. Every topic should be up for conversation once you get married. There shouldn't be anything that makes sharing information awkward or uncomfortable. By discussing the tiny problems now, you'll make it simpler to discuss bigger issues later.



Make Physical contact

No matter how you choose to conduct your conversation, maintaining eye contact is crucial. Oxytocin is released more readily in response to low-intensity stimulation of the skin, such as touching or stroking a partner's arm. In addition to fostering empathy and bonding between romantic partners, the love hormone can reduce stress and foster cooperative behaviour.

Make communication fun

Talking about problems and their solutions, family and financial issues, and how you and your spouse come to conclusions are all examples of communicating. Don't forget, though, that talking should be enjoyable as well. Talking with your partner entails exchanging humorous anecdotes, and future aspirations, and engaging in thoughtful discussion. These are the times that foster a stronger emotional bond and increase dopamine and oxytocin levels. Whether the talk that follows is serious or light-hearted, always take the time to vocally check in with your partner.

REFERENCES :

1. Collins, M., & Tamarkin, C. (1990). *Marva Collins' Way (Second ed.)*. Illinois (Chicago): Westside Preparatory School.
2. Dainton, M., & Aylor, B. (2002). Patterns of Communication Channel Use in the Maintenance of Long-Distance Relationships. *Communication Research Reports*, 19(2), 118-129.
3. Forward, G. L., Czech, K., & Lee, C. M. (2011). Assessing Gibb's Supportive and Defensive Communication Climate: An Examination of Measurement and Construct Validity. *Communication Research Reports*, 28(1), 1-15.
4. Fredrickson, B. (2003). The value of positive emotions: The emerging science of positive psychology is coming to understand why it's good to feel good. *American Scientist*, 91(July-August), 330-335.
5. Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What Do You Do When Things Go Right? The Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Benefits of Sharing Positive Events. *American Psychological Association*, 87(2), 228-245.
6. Hanley, A., Garland, E., Canto, A., Warner, A., Hanley, R., Dehili, V., & Proctor, A. (2015). Dispositional mindfulness and bias in self-theories. *Mindfulness*, 6(2), 202-207.
7. Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). *The how of Happiness: A Scientific Approach to Getting the Life You Want*. Penguin Press.
8. (n.d.). Marriage.com - Marriage Advice, Tips, Help Articles, Purpose & More. <https://www.marriage.com/advice/relationship/effective-relationship-communication-skills/>
9. Reivich, K., & Shatté, A. (2002). *The Resilience Factor: 7 Essential Skills for Overcoming Life's Inevitable Obstacles*. New York City: Broadway Books.
10. *Relationships and communication*. (n.d.). Better Health Channel - Better Health Channel. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/relationships-and-communication#what-is-communication>
11. Rosenberg, M. B. (2003). *Nonviolent Communication – A Language of Life*. Encinitas US: Puddle Dancer.
12. Schulz von Thun, F. (1981). *Miteinander reden 1 – Störungen und Klärungen*. Allgemeine Psychologie der Kommunikation. Reinbek Rowohlt.
13. *10 ways to improve communication in relationships*. (2021, March 12). tonyrobbins.com. <https://www.tonyrobbins.com/ultimate-relationship-guide/key-communication-relationships/>
14. Weger, H., Castle, G. R., & Emmett, M. C. (2010). Active Listening in Peer Interviews: The Influence of Message Paraphrasing on Perceptions of Listening Skill. *International Journal of Listening*, 24(1), 34-49.