

Communication Toolkit

Conflict management



This worksheet is designed to assist you in developing your communication skills to better manage your relationships.

If you are having trouble understanding this worksheet or need support, please call a MensLine Australia counsellor on 1300 78 99 78.

Things to think about

Communication in your relationship is like doing maintenance work – you want to keep it up, and not wait until it has broken down or collapsed.

Relationships are vitally important, and often, when a problem occurs, it is about both parties: it is about 'us'. Unresolved conflict can damage relationships. In good relationships, couples work out a way of discussing difficulties so that the issues don't keep coming back.

The use of 'we' statements can be helpful. These are a form of communication where both parties are considered.

Activity

Think about something you repeatedly argue about. Sometimes it is good to start off with a little thing.

Step 1: What is the issue or situation you are dealing with?

Tip: Just pick one small issue. The best outcomes are achieved when you only deal with the problem at hand. Do not bring in other complaints as it gets too hard and often does not solve any problem.

Example: We can't agree on who is taking out the rubbish bins.

Step 2: What is my point of view about the issue?

Example: I want to relax after work

Step 3: What might be the other person's point of view about the situation?

Example: They don't like the smell of rubbish

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Step 4: How is this impacting on both of you? [May be different to 2 and 3].

Example: Even though the bins are overflowing, no one is taking them out

The other person

Step 5: If you were an observer of this situation, including both perspectives, what would you advise?

1. Yourself

Example: Structure time to relax as well as taking the bins out

2. The other person

Example: Take bins out before they smell

3. Both of you together

Example: Take bins out regardless of your personal concerns and/or make a roster to take the bins out

Yourself

Both of you together

This is a problem solving situation so by listening, looking and thinking about the situation from a few angles, you both give and take. By observing and thinking in terms of 'we', trust, respect and equality can grow.

This worksheet is part of a series on anger management, communication and self-care. You may find it useful to complete other worksheets in this series. For more information or assistance, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78